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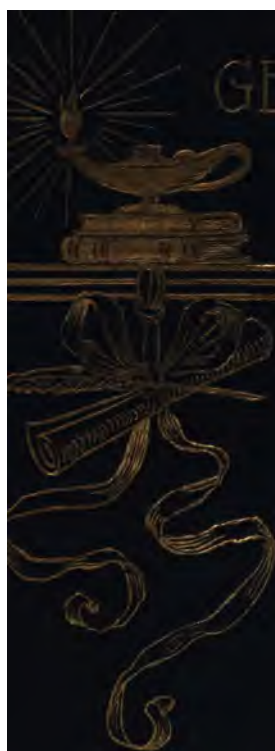
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PREFACE.

IN compiling this book of readings it has been my aim not only to make it fairly representative of my work as a reader of miscellaneous selections, but also to present to the public a few hitherto unpublished sketches written for my own use. I acknowledge my indebtedness to Mr. John T. Wheelwright for his permission to publish "A Sewing School for Scandal," "A Cure for Dudes," and "Uncle Micajah's Treat at Slambasket Beach." I have publicly read these sketches many hundred times, and I hope other readers will derive as much pleasure and profit from them as I have. My thanks are also given to Miss Genevieve Ward for her translation and adaptation of "Come Here," and

to the other American authors who have so kindly given me permission to include their poems in this book.

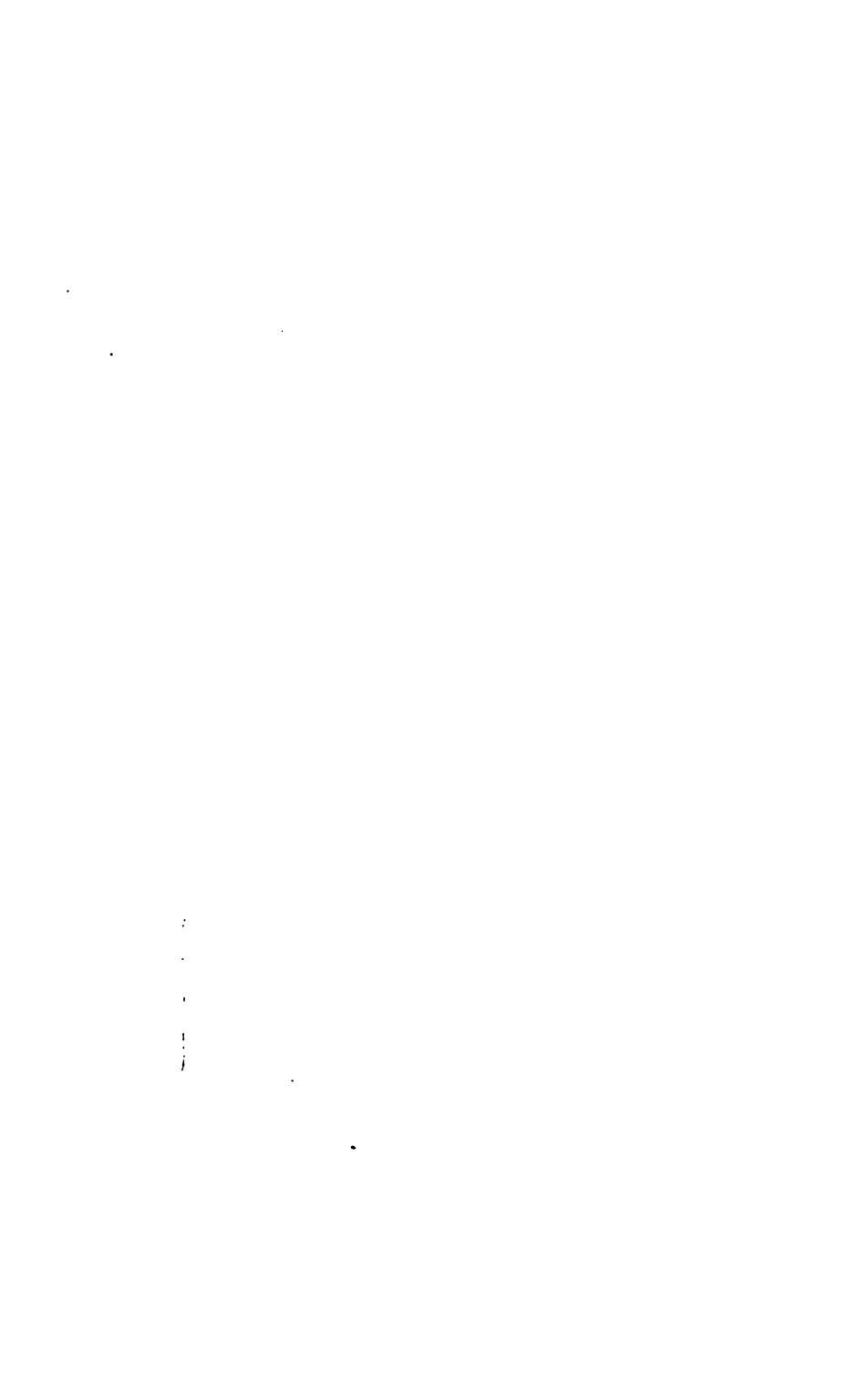
I have purposely refrained from giving specific instructions as to the interpretation of any of the selections herein contained. An instructor in elocution must be present *in the flesh*, and the indication, by printed symbols, of emphasis, stress, or what-not, is as sane and valuable as the directions given by Mr. Punch in the poem, "Burglar Bill."

I inscribe this book to those "fair eyes and gentle wishes" in my audiences which have so often "gone with me to my trial."

GEORGE RIDDLE.

“COME HERE!”

**TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN
BY MISS GENEVIEVE WARD.**



"COME HERE!"

ONE ACT.

SCENE. — *Manager's Office in a Theatre.*

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Manager.

Actress.

Call Boy.



ALL BOY (*discovered arranging papers and letters on table*). 'I do hope master 'll find a leading lady in this pile. — My! what a lot! why every female in town must want to lead. I wonder one ever gets a chambermaid, they all want to do "Lady Macbeth" or "Juliet"; should n't wonder if I played "Romeo" and "Hamlet" some day! I should like to have been "Romeo" to our last leading lady's "Juliet." She

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was a stunner and no mistake. What a pity she went off so sudden! he'll not easily replace her: the three he's had on trial since were n't fit to tie her shoes.

(Enter the Manager.)

Good morning, Sir.

Man. Good morning, Bob. Tell the bill-poster, when he comes, to display the new posters in the green-room for me to look at, and let me know when they are ready. *(Exit Call Boy. Man. sits at table.)* Oh! here's a day's work *(looks over letters as he talks)*. For one runaway leading lady I am overrun with scores of applicants. If among the number I might hope to find one with the smallest right to the title! Oh, yes! offers, questions, phrases in every form and shape: nobility, spirit, memory, education, beauty, genius, figure, talent, etc., and yet scarcely one that spells correctly. No, no, I'm not to be taken in again by lofty recommendations

or self-praise: this time they must submit to such a trial as cannot deceive. My plan is a capital one; the true art of acting is not so plentiful as these aspirants imagine.

Call Boy (entering). A lady wants to see you, Sir.

Man. Ask her to come in. Plague number two, the more self-possessed aspirant comes herself. Well, that's better than letters, one can form some opinion of the appearance at least. A few crusty sentences soon dispose of the hopeless cases.

Call Boy (who has gone off and returned ushering the lady in). The bill-poster is waiting for you, Sir. (*Exit.*)

Man. (bowing). Excuse me one moment, Madam. (*Aside.*) A good appearance. (*Exit.*)

Actress. And this is the sanctum of my old sweetheart. He does not dream his little wife that was to be is so near. Dear Frankie! Will he be glad to see me? or has he formed new ties, and forgotten the love of

his boyhood? How heart-broken we were, when we were torn from each other's arms! In all the sad years that have followed, that child's first sorrow has never faded from my thoughts. How altered he is; but for his eyes I should scarcely know him. A mustache does change a man. I too am changed. I am taller by a head, my hair is darker, and the burning Indian sun has colored the cheeks of the pale girl. I wonder if he will know me. We were little more than children when we parted.

Man. (entering). Now, Madam, your business?

Actress (aside). His manner is not encouraging. (*Raises her veil.*) I am —

Man. Never mind your name. What is your business? My time is short.

Actress (aside). He does not know me. I am more changed than I imagined. I am informed the place of leading lady in your company is vacant, and trusting that my tal-

ents may enable me to fill it worthily, I beg to offer you my services.

Man. So I presumed. I have been rather unhappy in my selection of late, and have determined in the future to guard against the usual fraud of a well-drilled tirade, or imitation of some celebrated actress.

Actress. As you please ; but I cannot understand how you can judge of the capability of an actress without hearing her recite.

Man. You seem very confident. Have you a mind to stand a special trial?

Actress. Perhaps.

Man. I am very frank, and I must say I do not think the result will meet your wishes. The test I propose is very difficult.

Actress. This difficulty surmounts the contempt which your reception inspires. You see, Sir, I too am frank.

Man. (aside). I'm convinced of that,

but I'll soon remove the veil of egotism from your eyes. (*Aloud.*) So you are willing to submit to this examination?

Actress. Yes.

Man. Mind, I do not want to see *yourself*; simply the character that is to be presented.

Actress. Then what character do you wish to see? Will you leave the choice to me?

Man. Oh, no!

Actress. Then it may indeed become a harder task than I thought; your selection may not be in my repertoire.

Man. Oh! yes, it is. I only require two words: "Come here."

Actress. Come here?

Man. Yes, and with the words, the meaning, emphasis, and expressions, that situation, character, and the surroundings would command.

Actress. This is strange, indeed.

Man. The part is simple and easily studied; do you think you can remember it?

Actress. Let me see. Come here! is that it?

Man. That's right.

Actress (*takes off her bonnet and shawl*). Well, then, I am ready.

Man. Let us imagine a queen who deigns to call one of her maids of honor.

Actress. Come here!

Man. Now she'll command a courtier, who is not in favor, to the foot of her throne.

Actress. Come here!

Man. And now, how would she call a hero to reward his glorious deeds in the battle-field, and to receive the laurel from her hands?

Actress. Come here!

Man. We now behold a princess at the death-bed of her father, whose throne she

will inherit. She is ambitious, and yet loves her father; she feels the high and lofty honors that will be hers, and yet the pain a child would *feel* to lose a loving father; with these emotions she calls on the physician who can bring relief. (*She hesitates.*) Well?

Actress. Come! Oh, come!

Man. Madam, you have taught me, that what is unknown to us is worth at least a trial. But further: Before a mother stand a loving couple, who pray for her consent; the lover is poor; she battles with her pride, it is a great struggle for her; at last with open arms she cries —

Actress. Come here!

Man. A mother calls her little daughter, who has done something to vex her.

Actress. Come here!

Man. And now it is her step-child.

Actress. Come here!

Man. A carriage is dashing by, the child

is in the street, the mother's heart is filled with terror, she calls her darling and cries out, —

Actress. Come here !

Man. In tears and sorrow a wife has bid adieu to her departing husband, whom the State has called to defend his country on the battle-field ; her only consolation is in her children, these she calls, and presses to her heart.

Actress. Come here !

Man. The husband has returned, and full of joy she calls her children as she observes him coming home.

Actress. Come here !

Man. While in his arms, she now observes his servant, and as with every one she would divide her joy she calls to him —

Actress. Come here !

Man. The feelings of a mother in all her joys and tribulation, you have most perfectly sustained. Now show me, how in despair a

widow, who has lost all she possessed through fire, confronts the creditors, who clamor for their dues, and whose cruelty has killed her husband. She stands by his body and points to all that now is left her, the remains of her dead husband, and calls on them to look at their work.

Actress. Come here !

Man. I must confess you depict pain as if you felt it. Now, for a different picture. Far from the noise of cities, in neat and simple country attire, a pretty maid, fair and rosy, spies a gentleman, an artist, whose eyes rest now on her and then again on a sketch-book he works upon. She creeps behind him, and lo ! she sees herself on that same book ; she is confused ; she gasps for breath, and then in triumph and delight calls her neighbors.

Actress. Come here !

Man. And now, show me how a country lassie would call a dog that stole her lunch ;

she'd like to have it back, but fears he might bite her.

Actress. Come here! come here!

Man. The dog has eaten the lunch, and comes; she is afraid of him; a neighbor is passing, she calls to him for help.

Actress. Come here! come here!

Man. A cruel husband threatens to beat his wife; she is enraged, and with a broom in hand exclaims —

Actress. Come here!

Man. A jealous wife finds out her husband is led astray by a beautiful coquette: she accuses him, he denies of course. But then, oh, happy moment! she finds a "billet-doux" from *her* to *him*. He comes home, and she again upbraids him, and he in turn enacts again the innocent. Then opening the letter, she, full of hate and rage, calls out —

Actress. There! come here!

Man. That's what you may call jealousy.
(*To audience.*) This teaches us to be more

cautious in the future. (*To her.*) But let us hear the tones of the maiden who looks with childish innocence upon her lover whom she chid, because he stole a kiss; he stands at some distance; seeing she has pained him, she calls him back to her.

Actress. Come here!

Man. He is more hurt than she thought, he does not return.

Actress. Come here!

Man. But he is not to be appeased until she offers her cheek to him for a kiss.

Actress. Come here!

Man. (*kisses her cheek*). Excellent!

Actress (*surprised*). What! is this part of the rehearsal?

Man. I beg your pardon. My bad behavior speaks volumes in your praise. You really have shown me life as it is. Your art is nature itself. Never shall I forgive myself for having so impolitely greeted such an artist. You have more than convinced

me. I am surprised ! delighted ! What can I do for you ?

Actress. Only a trifle.

Man. And that is —

Actress. To let me —

Man. Well ?

Actress. Bid you good morning.

Man. You would go ? Never ! You shall not leave.

Actress. Indeed I shall. I have been grossly insulted.

Man. I'll atone for everything.

Actress. That is not likely. You begin well — even now you are insulting me.

Man. I ? How ?

Actress. By pretending not to know me.

Man. How ? can it be ? For some time I have noticed a resemblance. These features, your talents, the kiss ; it all seems like witchcraft to me.

Actress. And yet this witchcraft has not told you that Mabel was my name ?

.

Man. Mabel! my playmate! my sweetheart! You? Oh! now I comprehend. Why did you not tell me at once? My little wife!

Actress. And yet you did not know me.

Man. How should I? You are so changed, so much improved. It is so long ago,—business absorbs,—one gets confused at times; and you have been lost to me so many years; how much we have to tell each other!

Actress. Yes, we'll still be friends, but I must go now.

Man. Indeed, I'll not let you go, until you give me one more trial of your art.

Actress. Well, I'll humor you so far.

Man. A man of good appearance, of fortune and education, was betrothed in childhood to a lovely girl. Reverses of fortune separated their families; after long years they meet, his heart is free, and casts its allegiance at her feet; the old childish love

burns again with all the fire of manhood ;
he longs to renew the old ties ; he offers
her his hand, his heart, all that he pos-
sesses ; and now awaits anxiously the words
that may tell him his love shall be re-
turned.

Actress. Come here !

Man. For life.

CURTAIN.

A CURE FOR DUDES.

BY JOHN T. WHEELWRIGHT.

A CURE FOR DUDES.

SCENE. — *The piazza of a large summer hotel at Bar Harbor, Mount Desert. Mr. Anise-seed Hunt is discovered impassively surveying the view from the piazza. He is dressed in clothes of a subdued color, his shoes are pointed and of patent leather; his cut-away coat is ornamented with a boutonnière.*



HUNT. This is a most unfortunate place for me to have turned up in. I cannot imagine why I ever came here. Why, fancy! I was having a most satisfactory time at Newport, when all of a sudden I said to myself, "What is this place, Mount Desert?" And I am such a creature of impulse that the next day I was on the railway. I really must learn

to govern my impulses, for when one gives way to an impulse, there is no knowing where it may land one. Now, this particular impulse has landed me at Mount Desert. It is beastly stupid here, and I am dreadfully bored, but then one is awfully bored everywhere. I feel lonely too; no matter how many resources a man has (and I brought three boxes and two portmanteaus, besides my canes and umbrellas), he sometimes feels lonely.

I wonder what all this rabble ever find to do here! After one has looked at the water, the mountains, and this uncommonly hideous village, one seems to be at the end of one's rope. Still they come in such crowds, summer after summer, that they must find amusement here. There is usually very little enjoyment for a gentleman in an American crowd, and I am deucedly uncomfortable here too. I acted so entirely on impulse that I didn't bespeak my room in

advance, and the wretch of a hotel clerk put me in the cupola of the hotel. When I rang or rather howled for a tub this morning, the boy told me that guests were not allowed to do their washing in the hotels themselves, and that I must send for a washwoman. Fancy!

What a stream of people go by here, and yet I don't see any one whom I know.

That girl over there with the big hat looks as if she might be rather jolly, but she is dressed very badly; and, dear me, what big feet she has! She must be a Boston girl, and in the winter, I suppose, she wears spectacles and talks Greek. I really believe that the only person I know in this confounded hole of Bar Harbor is Miss Clementine Rogers. By the way, how ridiculous it is to call this place Bar Harbor, when they have a prohibitory liquor law here, and a fellow can't get anything to drink, unless he goes down cellar. Now,

Miss Rogers is a very nice sort of a girl, but she is not quite in the right set. I met her at a queer party in New York, where they had artists, and authors, and musicians, and that lot. Her father and mother are not in society at all. I used, when I was a lad, to go to school with her brother, a queer chap, who wears a top-hat and an ulster of the vintage of 1871, on the avenues Sunday afternoons. Still his sister is an uncommonly clever girl. I am a little shy of uncommonly clever girls, as a rule. Not that I am afraid of them, not a bit. I am a match for the best of them, I flatter myself, at cleverness and all that. But they do make such a dead set for me; and that is such a bore. When one is well-born, good-looking, and rich,—in fact, an eligible *parti*,—his life becomes a constant game of hide-and-seek. Ah, there is Miss Rogers coming toward me. Good morning, Miss Rogers.

Miss R. Why, good morning, Mr. Hunt.

Is n't it a beautiful morning? If it were not for that threatening fog bank over beyond Ironbound, spreading like Eastern genii to envelop the earth. Have you ever seen a Mount Desert fog?

Mr. H. No, I never have.

Miss R. The jar, in which the fog genii are confined, is kept out on the Banks. When the lid is taken off the jar, the fog comes rolling in, a long, gray wall. You are sitting in the bright sunlight under an umbrella, with your heart's temporary idol, when, all of a sudden, everything becomes cold and gray, excepting your heart's temporary idol's red umbrella. You hurry to your hotel, and there you find the fog rolling in through the windows in chunks.

Mr. H. Most extraordinary! How long does this sort of thing last?

Miss R. About as long as a Mount Desert flirtation, and it is n't half so pleasant while it lasts, but it is pleasanter when it ends.

There is something so delightful in the first view of the sun after a fog.

Mr. H. It must be as delightful as the sensation of having no pain is, when you jam your finger ; that is, I mean the sensation when you have jammed your finger, when the pain has ceased and there is no sensation. Do I make myself clear ?

Miss R. Of course. What are you to do with yourself to-day, Mr. Hunt ?

Mr. H. I really have n't an idea.

Miss R. You will have plenty of chances for amusement. Nice-looking young men are scarce here.

Mr. H. I should say they were. I never saw so many badly dressed men together before — except in Boston. Now, just look at those men in flannels and bad hats in that extraordinary trap.

Miss R. Those jolly fellows on the buck-board ? You must n't sneer at our buck-boards. They are glorious !

Mr. H. They may be glorious, but they are very bad form. Most glorious things are, don't you think?

Miss R. I am wildly American, Mr. Hunt! and dote on glorious things! Did you never set off fire-crackers on the glorious Fourth, Mr. Hunt?

Mr. H. Never, I assure you. (*Aside*) Sometimes I think this girl makes fun of me — if it were not so impossible an idea.

Miss R. It *is* hard to think of you, a boy of fourteen, with blackened fingers and trousers at half-mast, baggy at the knees, getting up at two o'clock in the morning to wake up your parents with a toy-cannon.

Mr. H. Yes, I should think it would be hard.

Miss R. I used to do so, all except the baggy trousers. I was a regular tomboy. Did you ever climb a tree, Mr. Hunt?

Mr. H. (*seriously*). Not that I remember. Your question reminds me of a sort of conun-

drum which I once heard. I cannot quite remember what it was; something about an elephant and a writing-desk. I laughed very much when I heard it.

Miss R. (drearily). Oh, I wish you could remember it, Mr. Hunt!

Mr. H. I wish that I could; perhaps I shall be able to do so soon.

Miss R. Do try. (*Aside.*) How stupid the man is! He knows nobody at Mount Desert but me, and, though he secretly thinks me very "bad form," he talks to me all the time. I must get some amusement out of him, or find some way to make him shun me. How I wish he would be kidnapped by a picnic press-gang and be jolted to death over the twenty-one mile drive! (*Aloud.*) Have you thought of the conundrum yet, Mr. Hunt?

Mr. H. I beg your pardon, Miss Rogers, I was thinking of other things. I fear that I have lost the conundrum.

Miss R. Of what were you thinking?

Mr. H. Of hats, and of Charley Stuyvesant. Do you know him?

Miss R. Only slightly; he is a friend of my brother.

Mr. H. Of your brother! Why, I did n't know that your brother knew Stuyvesant!

Miss R. Oh, indeed!

Mr. H. Stuyvesant is an awfully good chap, awfully good—but— No, I think I will not say what I was going to say, after all. It is better not.

Miss R. Now please do, Mr. Hunt,— please do tell me, if it is not too dreadful.

Mr. H. I do not know whether I ought to tell it. I would n't have you repeat it for the world, Miss Rogers. Stuyvesant would never forgive me, if it should reach his ears, but he *does sit crooked in his dog-cart in the Park!*

Miss R. How dreadful!

Mr. H. And yet he wonders that I will

never drive with him. He is outrageous in his behavior really, and he breaks all social rules with the most awful disregard—I have known him wear a straw hat!!

Miss R. (in mock despair). No, no!

Mr. H. Indeed, he does; and turn-over collars too; and he gave all his English shoes to his groom, because he said that the pointed toes hurt him.

Miss R. Why do you not warn him about his conduct?

Mr. H. I ought to. He is wrecking himself utterly. But there are some things of which we cannot speak, even to intimates. Now as an instance, at the Vandervoorts' ball, a lot of us fellows were standing up against the wall, for it is bad form to talk or dance at a ball. You know the Vandervoorts?

(Miss Rogers shakes her head.)

Mr. H. Oh, no, I forget.

Miss R. Forget what?

Mr. H. (confused). Ah, ah; I don't know; I didn't forget. I don't know what I meant. But as I was saying—a lot of us were standing together, saying what a bore the party was, for the company was a little mixed. After all, I really wonder that you were not at it, Miss Rogers,—when Lawrence Goldlot came up to us—Lawrence had just come back from home—from England.

Miss R. Is n't Mr. Goldlot an American? I thought that his grandfather and yours came from the same town in Vermont, where they kept store together?

Mr. H. Ah,—ah,—yes, you know; we all speak of England as home, you know. But, as I was saying, as he was just back, we wished to learn the latest wrinkles in dress. A fortnight before one of the fellows had discovered from the cartoons of Du Maurier in *Punch* that the men in London were wearing a single shirt-stud in

the evening, and of course all of us were wearing single shirt-studs. Imagine our surprise when we saw that Lawrence wore three shirt-studs, and our annoyance when he told us with an insolent smile, that they have not worn single shirt-studs in London since last summer. Of course, we black-balled him soon after when his name came up at the club. There are some things which one cannot say, even to intimates.

Miss R. You served him quite right, I am sure.

Mr. H. And the worst of it was, that it was only a beastly sell after all; as we discovered, when we had all bought new sets of shirts, and saw Sir Randolph Racket at the Van Twellers' with a single stud.

Miss R. It certainly was as cruel as it was ill-bred. What club did they black-ball Mr. Goldlot's name at?

Mr. H. At *the* club. There is only one club in New York, where they black-ball.

Miss R. The Knickerbein, I suppose?

Mr. H. Yes.

Miss R. How did you like Sir Randolph Racket, Mr. Hunt?

Mr. H. Oh, he was an uncommonly good fellow.

Miss R. Was n't it a little remarkable for an English lord to take the trouble to dress for a ball, when in such a barbarous country as America? I wonder that he did n't wear a shooting-jacket!

Mr. H. Oh, Englishmen are getting to be quite tolerant of this country, really. And they feel quite at home in New York society, which is very English, you know. I am taken for an Englishman all the time.

Miss R. It must annoy you very much to be taken to be an Englishman.

Mr. H. Oh, no, it does not, I assure you.

Miss R. But I suppose that it would annoy an Englishman to be taken for an American, would n't it?

Mr. H. Of course it would. Fancy!

Miss R. And yet I look forward to a day, when all English gentlemen will wear dusters and G. A. R. hats, drive in light buggies with long-tailed horses, and talk through their nose, and say, "I swan to man," according to the true British idea of a typical American. But is not the Knickerbein the club which the newspapers call the "Dudes' Resort"?

Mr. H. I have seen something in the prints about dudes. Those vulgar newspaper men have to be funny about something, and they could find nothing better to do than to poke fun at gentlemen.

Miss R. But is "dude" another word for "gentleman" as "Arry" is for a cad?

Mr. H. I have never troubled myself to know what they mean by the word "dude." It seems to have been widely used by the street arabs, who, of late, have ceased requesting me to shoot my hat, and cry out instead, "Shoot the dude."

Miss R. (aside). The murderous-minded wretches ! Would they drive the poor man to suicide ?

Mr. H. You say, Miss Rogers, that you have heard our club called the "Dudes' Resort" ?

Miss R. Yes, there are rumors current that the members have to wear weights on their feet to keep them down on the floor, as they are so "light," and that the club servants, when they wish to speak to a gentleman, always look respectfully at the ceiling for him, against which he is sure to be bobbing, like an escaped little red balloon.

Mr. H. You must not believe all that, you know. The beggars were poking fun at us, that is all. I hate fellows who are always poking fun and laughing. No gentleman likes notoriety ; of course one likes to dress properly and quietly, but one does not like to be noticed or to be held up to ridicule.

Miss R. I am sure you must find life a serious affair.

Mr. H. Yes, I do; not that I do not like decent enjoyment; when I am properly dressed, I like to tool a drag or to walk down the avenue, or to drop into the club. Now, I do not laugh at the other people, who do everything in such a vulgar manner; who wear horrid clothes and flashy jewelry, and who rush around talking loud and having what they call a "good time." Horrid Americanism, that expression "good time." I cannot endure such people, but I simply avoid them. I do not abuse them. Why should a quiet, unassuming man be attacked as if it were a crime for him to dress well and to enjoy the same sports which gentlemen in other countries enjoy? But I am making a speech. I hate a fellow who makes speeches, don't you, Miss Rogers?

Miss R. Not if he makes pretty ones.

Mr. H. Yes, some fellows do make pretty

speeches, but I never could, you know. I have pretty speeches made to me sometimes. But the women in America rather force the running. They do not know how to take compliments, though they do how to make them.

Miss R. (in holy indignation). Oh, you wretch! I shall make you pay for this! (*Dissembling.*) One cannot be such a "banquet of beauty" as you are without paying the penalties. Your lot must be made as unhappy as poor Algernon's in "Patience."

Mr. H. (confused). Oh, really, now it's not quite fair, you know, to poke fun at a fellow. I did not mean to say that I was always being complimented, only that there are some women who always flatter men, and that American men are not dabs at flattery. I am sure *you* never have flattered me, though I wish I could say pretty things to you. (*Gasps slightly and trifles with his cane.*)

Miss R. (laughing). I am sorry that you find it so difficult.

Mr. H. Oh, really you misunderstand; the difficulty is in me — not in you. There are all kinds of pretty things which a fellow might say about you, if he were only clever enough.

Miss R. (aside). I do believe that it is succumbing to the atmosphere of Mount Desert. It seems to be getting mildly sentimental. And I am the only woman it knows, and it is too inert to get acquainted with another. My summer will be ruined, unless I bring it up with a round turn. Mr. Hunt will be awfully shocked if he thinks he is committing himself. The Aniseseed Hunts and the Rogers are like oil and water. (*Aloud, with great interest.*) Did you ever go rocking, Mr Hunt?

Mr. H. (taking his cane from his mouth). What is "rocking," Miss Rogers?

Miss R. Ah, I see that you are a "tender foot."

Mr. H. A "tender foot"! Fancy!

Miss R. Yes, a "tender foot." So you have never been out West. My brother Tom is a "cow-puncher" in Dakota. Out there, they call new-comers from the East, "tender feet." Perhaps at Mount Desert, we should call them "tender hearts." How nice it sounds, "tender heart," does n't it?

Mr. H. (*puts his single eye-glass in the wrong eye and looks alarmed*). But you do not tell me what "rocking" is, Miss Rogers?

Miss R. (*looking at him a moment*). Are you near-sighted in *both* eyes, Mr. Hunt?

Mr. H. (*dropping the glass with a nervous contraction of his cheek*). You were speaking about "rocking," Miss Rogers?

Miss R. I think that it is very rude not to answer my question. It was only from a solicitude for your well-being that I asked it. If you are near-sighted in the left eye only, you will strain your right eye by putting a glass in it. If you are near-sighted in both eyes, you ought to wear double glasses.

(*Mr. H. twiddles his eye-glass in an embarrassed way.*)

Miss R. Of course, I give you too much credit for good sense to suppose that you would wear a single eye-glass, simply because some Englishmen do. (*Aside.*) That's straight from the shoulder, as brother Tom says. (*To Mr. H.*) Never mind. Let me tell you about "rocking." It is great fun, though it may make the judicious matrons grieve. You came up here on the steamer, did you not?

Mr. H. Yes.

Miss R. And, of course, you were on deck wondering at the grand view of the mountains rising from the sea?

Mr. H. Yes.

Miss R. I knew that you were a lover of nature. I hope that you had the eye-glass in the near-sighted eye; for then you must have seen that the rocks along the shore were dotted with parasols and umbrellas.

Mr. H. I did remark something of the kind. I supposed that the umbrellas shaded people who were sketching from nature.

Miss R. Oh, Tender-heart! Under each of those parasols lurked a pair of "rockers," the "world forgetting," but not by the "world forgot," for this is the greatest place for gossip. I hope that sometimes "rocking" amounts to more than mere flirting. I despise "ligh summer mashing." You must come "rocking" with me some day, Mr. Hunt. (*She heaves a little sigh. He changes his eye-glass from one eye to the other, and sucks his cane.*)

Mr. H. What extraordinary expressions you use at Mount Desert. Is "light summer mashing" the same as "rocking"?

Miss R. Not at all; "rocking" is but a phase of "light summer mashing," which includes "buck-boarding," "canoeing," "walking," and "piazza-ing." We are piazza-ing now.

Mr. H. Then this is "light summer mashing." It is very charming.

Miss R. Yes; but it is not nearly the pleasure that "canoeing" is.

"How light we float, how swiftly, ooh!
Were life but like the birch canoe,"

Clough should have sung. To float down over the moon-lit waters under the shadows of the crags, in a canoe which obeys every impulse of the oar, as deftly as a swallow a turn of its wings; is not that heavenly?

Mr. H. I should think that it would be damp and dangerous.

Miss R. I am afraid that you are not romantic. The "bold white rose" which clambers up to my lady's window does not think of the danger from the shaky trellis. If Romeo had said, —

"What light from yonder window breaks —
Aitch-choo-aitchoo! I fear I'm catching cold,"—

all the romance would have gone out of that affair.

Mr. H. Romance and all that are awfully bad form.

Miss R. (sighing). Yes, there are no Romeos nowadays; they are as scarce as dodos.

Mr. H. I don't know, you know. I've known lots of fellows who were awful spoons on girls. They have told me about their love affairs over cigars, lots of times. Decent fellows, too. After midnight, a man with a cigar will tell you everything he ever knew or thought; did you ever notice that?

Miss R. My experience of men, with a cigar, after midnight, is limited, Mr. Hunt.

Mr. H. I never smoke after midnight myself. It is too dangerous altogether, and it is dangerous sitting up with a fellow who does. He tells you a lot of rubbish which he has told a hundred other men before, and if his

confidence is betrayed by any one of the hundred, he is sure to think that you are the betrayer. If you wish to get rid of a man, sitting up with him after midnight with a cigar is a neater way than lending him money.

Miss R. It is certainly less expensive. But I think I know a better way of getting rid of a man — (*Two young girls run along the piazza.*) Why, here come Mary Skinner and Lulie Livingstone. (*Mr. Hunt arises from his chair and gazes gloomily across the street.*)

Miss R. Pray, let me present Mr. Hunt. Miss Skinner, Mr. Hunt. (*Mr. Hunt bows coldly.*) And Miss Livingstone. (*Mr. Hunt bows with effusion.*)

Mr. H. I am delighted to meet you, Miss Livingstone. I have the pleasure of knowing your brother, Louis.

Miss L. (giggling). Why, I have n't any brother Louis.

Mr. H. Then he is your cousin ?

Miss L. Oh, I am no relation of *the* Livingstones. I live in Brooklyn.

(Mr. H. turns away and gazes gloomily again.)

Miss S. Are n't you coming down to the wharf to see the steamboat come in, Clem ? Don't you wish that you knew who was coming to-day ?

Miss R. Why, who are coming ?

Miss S. Charley Means and Burt Mendum. My gracious, won't we have fun ?

Miss L. We will have our tin-types taken every day !

Miss S. What time is it ? Why, the boat is nearly due. Come along, Lulie ; I do wish that you would come, Clementine, and you too, Mr. Hunt ; it's perfectly immense fun to see the steamboat come in. Why, there's a new yacht sailing into the harbor ! Is n't it lovely ?

Miss R. I wonder what men are aboard ?

Oh, Lulie; what if it should be the "Wavelet"?

Miss L. Oh, Tom Gookin's yacht! That would be too weirdly lovely for anything.

Miss R. It *is* the "Wavelet"! I can see the private signal which I made—remember he had.

Miss S. And there is a delicious full moon!

Miss L. What sails we shall have! Won't it be splendid?

Miss S. Oh, it will be real elegant! Oh, *do* come down to the wharf, Clem.

Miss L. Yes, come along, both of you. Don't sit here spooning, all the morning. I do hate piazza-girls.

Miss S. I think I can see Charley Mendum on the upper deck of the steamer.

Miss L. I tell you what, Mamie, you'd better hide that blue ribbon the little Yale man gave you. Charley will be perfectly furious if he sees it.

Miss S. No, I sha'n't, blue's ever so much

more becoming to me than crimson. Come along, Lulie ; Charley will be wildly jealous, and it will be such fun.

(The two rush down to the wharf. Mr. H. solemnly removes his hat as they go.)

Mr. H. What extraordinary girls !

Miss R. Oh, they are very young !

Mr. H. And very American !

Miss R. They certainly do not ape foreign manners, but then, they do not think of what they are doing. They think only of having a good time.

Mr. H. But do they not get talked about ?

Miss R. Of course, but they do not care a pin. This is a great place for gossip. *(Aside.)* Now for my efficacious plan for getting rid of a man, my cure for dudes. As I was saying, Mr. Hunt, this is a great place for gossip. If a girl is with a man all the time, of course their names get coupled, and there is a great deal of talk. Now, though you have been here but a few days, still you have been with me all the

time, and I have no doubt but that our names —

Mr. H. (interrupting). You do not mean to tell me that people say that I am attentive to you ! How perfectly absurd !

Miss R. (as if nettled). You forget your manners, Mr. Hunt. It is hardly polite to say that it is absurd that a man should be attentive to me.

Mr. H. Of course, I did n't mean that, Miss Rogers. It would not be absurd ; on the contrary, it would be quite natural, I assure you. Any man ought to be pleased, in fact, honored, to have his name mentioned in connection with yours.

Miss R. Ah, dear Aniseseed ; you have paid me the highest compliment which a man can pay a woman. I can only refer you to papa. He is now in New York ; his business address is Hiram K. Rogers, Rogers, Sherman & Peet, Glue and Hides. Let me see ; it 's Tuesday ; you can get to New York by

Thursday morning. You know where our house is, I believe ; mamma will be so glad to welcome you, I know.

Mr. H. (in great alarm). But really, Miss Rogers.

Miss R. You do not call me Clementine, dear Aniseseed.

Mr. H. I am afraid that —

Miss R. Afraid of whom ? Of pa and ma ? How perfectly absurd ! They will not bite.

Mr. H. But, Miss Clementine, I am afraid that — I am very sorry, it is very awkward, but you really misunderstand me.

Miss R. Oh, no ; I have always appreciated you, Aniseseed ; you dress so well that my heart melted at the very sight of you.

Mr. H. (in great alarm). When does the steamer sail ?

Miss R. You have just fifteen minutes ; you really must hurry if you wish to pack. Good by, dear ; oh ! if you can't find pa at his office, you must look up ma.

Mr. H. (waving his cane wildly. Aside).
I must get out of this place as soon as I can.
A man's life is n't safe here. I never had
such a turn in my life. (*Starts to go.*) Good
by, Miss Rogers.

Miss R. Fly on the wings of love to New
York and back. I shall eschew "light sum-
mer mashing" in all its forms during your
absence. (*Mr. Hunt steals away unobserved.*)
Don't forget pa's address: Rogers, Sherman
& Peet, Glue and Leather. (*Perceives that
Mr. H. has gone.*) What, gone! and no
tender farewell! Alas! I fear that he will
never ruin a summer's day for me again. I
have been unmaidenly, I grant, and I would
cut a sorry figure in an international novel,
but I think I have found a Rogers' Ready
Relief from Dudes.

A SEWING "SCHOOL FOR
SCANDAL."

BY JOHN T. WHEELWRIGHT.

A SEWING "SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL."

INTRODUCTION.



Tis, of course, an impertinence to tear away the veil which shrouds the Eleusinian mysteries of the Sewing Circle, a ring which no power of man can shatter, until the love of tea, good works, and of removing the mote from their neighbors' eyes shall have departed from the hearts of the fair sex.

Pray excuse this impertinence, and imagine that the "curtain rises and discovers" Mrs. John Quincy Adams Gobang and her daughter Sally, in a pleasant low-studded room, in a house in one of the old New

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England towns, where the great Indiamen have long since rotted at the wharves, the young men have become portly old gentlemen, and where the crowd at the post-office for the afternoon mail creates the only ripple upon the calm surface of the mill-pond.

Mrs. Gobang (to her daughter Sally, who, thanks to evolution, has disposed of that uncomfortable "silent monitor," a Puritan conscience). My dear, it is high time that you were getting your things on for the Sewing Circle.

Miss Sally (revelling in the absence of her "silent monitor," is devouring Ouida's "Moths," curled up in an easy-chair). Oh, bother the Sewing Circle, mamma! I hate to think of all those old cats, talking spiteful scandal and raising a tempest in a teapot over every little harmless thing which one does.

Mrs. Gobang. My dear, put down your book immediately. I hope that it is an improving one.

Miss Sally. Why, of course, — it is a book on "Insectology" called "Moths," — one of the list of books recommended by the Women's Educational Society for the Encouragement of Home Studies.

Mrs. Gobang. I am glad to see you take the slightest interest in useful reading. Moths are most annoying things in the house. Does the book recommend camphor or borax for their destruction? But we must hurry, my dear.

(Miss Sally reluctantly puts on her things, and with her mother, walks down the long, straggling street of the drowsy old town.)

Mrs. Gobang. The Circle meets at Mrs. Endicott's, does it not?

Miss Sally. Yes, I suppose that all the old tabbies are hard at their gossip by this time. We must be in inch bits by this

time. Society here is like Bob Endicott's class in college. If a party of his classmates happened to meet of an evening in his room, it did n't take them long to decide that all the fellows who were not there were either knaves or fools; and when one of the party went away, the door would hardly be shut before a chorus would shout out, "What an ass that chap is!" and a diminishing chorus would repeat this as each went away, and when Bob was left alone he would get up, bolt the door, and cry aloud, "Thank the Lord, that gang has cleared out at last!" Do you not feel like that at the end of one of your parties?

Mrs. Gobang. Pray be more charitable, my dear. Here we are at Mrs. Endicott's.

Miss Sally. See, Mrs. Skinner has planted her game eye straight on me. I suppose she is illustrating her lecture on total depravity, by exhibiting my Derby hat and ulster. It's a *cold* day when I get left by Mrs. Skinner.

(Mrs. Gobang and her daughter enter the room, which is filled with ladies of the Sewing Circle.)

Miss Sally (plunging into a seat by the younger women). Oh! my dear Mrs. Skinner, give me something to do, please. I really am aching to be at work. Let me cut out the things. (Aside.) How her soul rises up in arms at the bare thought of my hacking at the precious cotton! She always goes on the principle that the poor are thin, just to save cloth.

Mrs. F. Flint Skinner (arising from the presidential chair). Silence, ladies. Miss Bellows is about to read the report of the last meeting.

Miss Bellows (reading in a weak and slightly acidulated voice). "The 'Bee' met on Friday, March 29, at Mrs. Coffin's. Fourteen members present, twenty-two absent. It was voted that in future the absent should be fined two cents, and the tardy one cent.

"It was proposed by Mrs. Skinner, and carried, that lunches should in future be confined to two solids, or to one solid and a sweet; bread and cake to be unlimited.

"Mrs. Skinner informed the Society of the ungrateful conduct of Mrs. MacGillicuddy, an indigent Irish person, who, on being presented with a bundle of neat and tasteful clothing from the Club, refused to take them, saying that her children were neither broader than they were long, nor as thin as starved eels.

"It was voted that Mrs. MacGillicuddy's name be stricken from the list of beneficiaries.

"Two garments manufactured.

"Meeting adjourned to lunch at 1.30 P. M."

Mrs. Skinner. In moving the acceptance of the secretary's report, ladies, I would say that Mrs. MacGillicuddy's reception of our gifts pains me deeply. It should make no

difference to us in our works of charity if we occasionally meet with ingrates. We must persevere and continue in our good works. The narrow strips of cotton are excellently adapted for the meagre and slim, while the stouter beneficiaries can congratulate themselves upon having well-fitting though tight garments. A nice economy and a prudent thrift in *us* serves to inculcate those excellent qualities in those whom we benefit.

Furthermore, it seems to me, ladies, that a Sewing Circle which counts among its members the most gifted, intellectual, and strong-minded women of a most advanced community, should be above the petty gossip which, in other and less favored circles, is said to give the ladies' tongues more exercise than their needles. Ahem!

(The secretary's report is then accepted, sine die.)

Mrs. Skinner (in a hoarse whisper to Miss

Bellows). Miss Bellows, did you hear that dreadful story about Sally Gobang and young Endicott at the "Parish Party"? He actually *held her hand* on the stairs; Mrs. Eaves saw her with her own eyes. I wonder she could live to tell the tale.

Miss Bellows. I must say that I can hardly believe it, unless they are engaged. I had thought that Sally Gobang was not the girl to let any young man hold her hand, unless he was engaged to her; much less that wild young Endicott, who, ever since he has been at college, has behaved in a very unbecoming manner. It really disgusts me to see him walking down the street, smoking those horrid little paper cigars, and wearing such vulgar checked clothes. I am indeed sorry that she can take up with such a young man!

Miss Sally (soliloquizing). I know that they are talking about me again. My, how spiteful they look! It's a perfect godsend

for them to have me to talk about. How I should like to spike their ill-natured mouths, as soldiers do cannon! (*Aloud.*) Girls, did you ever play "Bunny"?

Miss Lydia Lobside. I have never heard of the game before, and judging from its name, I hope I never should do anything of the kind; but how do *you* play it?

Miss Sally. Oh, it is simple enough! A gentleman takes your hand in one of *his* and strokes it gently with his other hand. It is a very fashionable game, my dears.

Miss Lobside. What a shocking thing! (*In a whisper to her neighbor, Miss Pettingill.*) Sally is real fast since she spent last winter in Boston.

Mrs. T. Boulevard Tompkins (catching the name of the centre of the solar system). Boston, my dear, is a nice little place. It reminds me of a dear English country town. I never was amused in an English country town, and I understand it is difficult to be amused in

Boston. But they are so quaint, restful, and pretty, and they manage railway travelling so much better in England than they do in this country. They never call your trunks baggage in England; it is very *American* to do so, and therefore vulgar. Why, when I was *first* in England, when I got out from the train at my station, the guard came up to me and touched his hat.

Miss Sally. Guards in that climate are so polite.

Mrs. Tompkins. My dear, you should not interrupt me. I have been to Europe and know all about it. Well, as I was saying, when so *rudely interrupted*, I asked the guard if he could find my trunk and valise in the baggage-car. The guard looked much surprised and went away, but soon came back, saying, "Did n't find 'em, mum, but there is a box and portmanteau marked T. B. T. in the luggage van." I had n't been in Europe then, and did n't know all about it. Why,

even the common Englishmen are so exact in their speech.

Miss Sally. Oh! what an interesting story, Mrs. Tompkins. Some people can go abroad and never see anything, but you saw so much and tell about it so well. But your story reminds me of the New-Yorker who asked the Boston horse-car conductor if the car went to the Art Mūseūm. "This car goes to the Art Musēum, sir," replied the conductor, with a meaning emphasis. Even horse-car conductors in Boston are cultured.

(All through this speech she makes a charming grimace at the other girls, who titter, though they feel guilty at encouraging her wickedness. They all have shreds of conscience left, and look upon Sally Gobang as bad, delightful, and unattainable.)

Miss Lobside. Oh, Mrs. Tompkins, how envious it makes me to hear your delightful talk about lands across the sea! I long so

much to breathe a free breath out of the confined provincial air of this New England village, and to feast my starving eyes upon the delicately foliated spires of the quaint cathedrals; to wander, hushed in silence, through their forest-like interiors, and to gaze, spell-bound, upon the glorious works of the "old masters," illumined by the checquered light sifted through the magnificent pictured windows.

Miss Sally. Oh, my! Bury me decent! Girls, here comes Apollinaris Limpkins; his ma calls him Apollo, but Apollinaris is so much the fitter name for one so harmless. How do, Mr. Limpkins? I hope that you have brought your work, and have come to spend the afternoon with us.

Mr. Limpkins. Yes, Miss Gobang, I have brought with me my work, as you call it; a quaint design in sunflower and apple blossoms, which I am designing for the curtains of my room; it is out of my head.

Miss Sally. Are you out of your head? What a pity, Mr. Limpkins.

Mr. Limpkins. The design is original, I mean, Miss Gobang. The true artist is not confined to the brush or crayon, Miss Sally. With a free, bold needle, the most delightful artistic effects can be produced. I hope that I will not interfere with your conversation. I really can't live without the society of the fair sex, I assure you, and, when all of the girls in town huddle together for the afternoon, what can I do but join the party?

Miss Sally. Why, Mr. Limpkins, we look upon you as quite one of us, you know. You are a "very parfait carpet-knight."

Mr. Limpkins. I am so much obliged to you, Miss Sally.

(He sets to work upon his apple blossoms with a contented smile.)

Mrs. Skinner. Ladies, pray do not be wasteful with the cotton. It distresses me

to see such large pieces of cloth ruined in the cutting and scattered upon the floor.

(Miss Sally cuts a great slash in a breadth of cotton, and giggles.)

Mrs. Skinner. Such bargains I found at White's, and Jordan & Marsh's, when I was last to Boston, Miss Bellows; a lot of damaged kid gloves, just as good as new, except that they were stained just a *leetle* olive green with salt water. I got some for my Mary Jane, who has gone to Boston on a visit. I turned her black alpaca gown, and put a fresh breadth in her pink silk to get rid of the grease spot which she got on it at the "Coffee Party" over to Weymouth Centre. Mary Jane had such a good idea about that pink gown. I bought a remnant of cretonne, I think they call it, and she cut the flowers out and sewed 'em on to her dress, so that they look just like embroidery.

(Mr. Limpkins turns very pale, and looks at Miss Sally.)

Mr. Limpin. Oh, such a profanation of high art, Miss Sally! So unlovely, so immoral, I may almost say. Oh, how little there is which is true and beautiful in the world! Were you ever oppressed with the sadness of life, Miss Sally? (*His hands drop limply on the sides of his chair.*)

Miss Sally. Never before, Mr. Limpin.

Mrs. Skinner (*who, full of maternal pride, has been unmindful of the asides of the two*). Miss Bellows, I have had such a nice letter from my Mary Jane from Boston! Let me read it to you:—

“BOSTON, February 27, 1880.

“DEAR MA,— I am having a real elegant time in Boston, but I had to pay a whole dollar to the hackman who took me from the depot.”

Mrs. Tompkins. Oh, they manage these things so much better abroad! There the cabmen are so respectful and so reasonable in their charges.

Mrs. Skinner (in a tone of reproof). I was reading from my Mary Jane's letter, Mrs. Tompkins. A dollar does not grow on every tree. I am kind of sorry now that I let Mary Jane go to Boston. (*She continues reading the letter:*)

"Tavy Rich says my black alpaca is real stylish, and that my pink silk is unlike anything she ever saw before. She says that it will make a decided sensation.

"I went to a kettledrum the other day, but all the young men who were introduced to me, after asking whether I ever had been in Boston before, would remark, 'See you later,' and leave me without waiting for my answer. Being a good talker does n't help one much under such circumstances. I suppose that all the young people are very witty. A young gentleman will come up to a young lady (by the way, Tavy Rich says that in society they say 'man' instead of 'gentleman' now), and say something to her, with an entrancing smile. She also smiles when she replies, and then they both laugh. The men may be very clever, but to me they only say, 'See you later!' and then never 'see me later' at all. But I am having a real good time.

"But I feel sure that my pink silk, with the cretonne flower embroidery, is too unusual; and I am going to a ball to-morrow night, and my gloves are so spotted with olive green! I like bargains when I buy them, but it is hateful to wear them."

Mrs. Skinner. Ungrateful girl, is n't she, Miss Bellows? But the young have no idea of the value of money. "Look after the pence, and the pounds will look after themselves," that is my motto. Why, do you know, Miss Bellows, that by importing my shoe-strings from England, I make a clear saving of thirty-seven and a half cents a year?

Mrs. Tompkins. My dear Mrs. Skinner, I know too much about the extortionate prices the shopkeepers demand in this country. So uncivil they are too! Why, in Paris, at the "Bong Marshay," everything is dirt cheap, and the shopkeepers as polite as they can be. I don't like to be conceited and talk about myself, but my French bootmaker

cried out with delight at the beautiful shape and smallness of my foot, and would have made a model of it in wax to display at the Exposition the shoes he made for me, if Mr. T. had not put *his* foot down and insisted that it would be improper. How beautiful the French language is, and how distinguishable! Why, every morning the garkong would come to my door with the "cafe au late" (so called by him, because I never rang for it till ten o'clock), and say, "Avez vous beswang de pang, ce mating, Madame?" and I would answer, "Nong, nong, mong bong garkong."

In the Fobug St. German, where I met the old secluded "Noblesse oblige" in society, the Compte de Beycheville declared that I spoke his language "comme une native."

Miss Sally (aside to Mr. Limpkins). A native Yankee land, with a strong draught of east wind through the nose.

Mr. Limpkins. Our dreadful east wind, Miss Sally, how it sweeps away sentiment! Our New England girls have no feminine atmosphere; it is swept away by the east wind. Our art is crude and garish—all east wind; and our orators—there's an example of east wind for you—they are frigid, cutting, and disagreeable.

Miss Sally. Yes; and most of our manly young men are swept West by it. Pray let me look at your embroidery, Mr. Limpkins. (*Mr. Limpkins hands it to her.*) Oh, how weird! Those red pin-wheels are perfectly immense.

Mr. Limpkins. Beg your pardon, Miss Sally; those are apple blossoms conventionalized.

Miss Sally. But they don't look like apple blossoms, Mr. Limpkins.

Mr. Limpkins. If they did they would be so unlovely.

Miss Sally. Oh, I understand. For in-

stance, some of our youth are young men conventionalized.

Mrs. Elderbrewster (stopping from her work, which she alone has persevered in pursuing, the other good ladies having dropped their cotton, scissors, and needles to indulge in the more pleasant amusement of talking in unison, peopling the room with flying rumors, and mingling shreds of absent friends' reputations with the scraps of cotton). You have hit the nail on the head, Sally. When I was a girl the young men commanded good ships, or worked hard on their farms, and now it seems to me that the young men, who don't spend their valuable time in collecting old pewter mugs and battered furniture, become fast brokers or idle young lawyers, having nothing to do but to talk to frivolous young girls, or to loaf at their dreadful clubs.

Mrs. Endicott. But not many years ago, Mrs. Elderbrewster, these same young men

spent a good deal of their time fighting for their country.

Mrs. Elderbrewster. Well, yes, Mrs. Endicott.

Mrs. Tompkins. There, I should know you were an American from the way you began your sentence with "Well," Mrs. Elderbrewster. When I was in Europe —

Mrs. Elderbrewster. I am glad that I am an American, Mrs. Tompkins. I sincerely hope I shall never see another country, if I come back a snob. WELL, here comes the tea, Mrs. Endicott, and not the first thing done! There is Sally Gobang sewing on the red-flannel shirt which she began last fall.

Miss Sally. But it is for a particularly energetic heathen, Mrs. Elderbrewster, and it must be sewed strong for jungle-wear and fierce conflicts with wild beasts. It is inspiring to think that this simple red-flannel shirt, with perhaps an old beaver hat, will

be the entire ball-room costume of an African prince. (*Aside.*) I really *must* sew up a note in it from the fair maker. What fun to "mash" a Zulu from afar!

Miss Lobside (*who has been engaged in a rapt conversation with Mrs. Tompkins about Europe*). Oh! Ruskin is too lovely! Did you ever see Turner's "Slave Ship"?

Mrs. Tompkins. Don't talk to me about pictures. I have seen miles of them, by the old masters, Titus Andronicus, Bierstardt, and Machiavelli.

Miss Lobside. Yes, I have read of Machiavellian conceptions.

Mrs. Tompkins. He has a wonderfully poetic imagination, but Mack's, as the artists call him, Mack's province is color, rich, gorgeous, pervading color. But I have given sacristans, burglars, and guides, oceans of money to see all these pictures.

Mrs. Skinner. I should never enjoy a trip abroad, I know, except for the bargains.

Miss Sally. Shopping is a woman's substitute for tobacco, I do believe. Who ever heard of a man shopping?

Mr. Limpkins. Why, I shop, Miss Gombang; I do indeed.

Miss Sally. I should n't believe it, Mr. Limpkins.

Mr. Limpkins. You don't know what a time I had matching this glorious orange color for the sunflowers. And I had to ransack all the shops for the tender rose-colored floss for the apple blossoms. This stamped velvet was a remnant which I bought for a mere song. (*Miss Sally pulls up her shirt collar, puts her little eyeglass in her "light sarcastic eye," looks at Mr. Limpkins from head to foot, and bursts into laughter.*)

Miss Sally. You would n't put your little white hand into a blaze of living fire like the Roman youth, would you, Mr. Limpkins?

Mr. Limpkins. No, I am sure I should

not. (*Aside.*) I really think the girl is laughing at me. I shall pique her by my attentions to another. Miss Lobside, you spoke of Mr. Ruskin just now; he is my inspiration.

Miss Lobside (brightening up). I cannot say that I have *read* Ruskin, Mr. Limpkins; I have *drunk him in*, as the thirsty sand drinks in the gentle rain.

Miss Sally (aside). Or as Miss Lobside does a little attention from a man. But if they are going to talk about books, *I*—why, *I* shall mash the new minister.

(*She makes room by her side for the clergyman, Mr. Charles Lowkirk, who has just entered the room, a fine simper upon his interesting face.*)

Miss Sally. It's so good of you to come to superintend our self-denying work, Mr. Lowkirk. Just look at this red-flannel shirt which I am making for the heathen. Would n't you like one just like it?

Mr. Lowkirk (in a gentle tone). I enjoy entering into the work of my new flock, Miss Gobang. I note a spirit of devotion to the poor among you, which pleases me.

Miss Sally. Oh, Mr. Lowkirk, what a lovely curl that is on your forehead! (*Mr. L. raises his hand nervously to his forehead, and blushes like a rose. The dear man is quite bald, save for a curling golden lock of hair on his brow.*)

Miss Sally. Haven't you been begged for that curl hundreds of times?

Mr. Lowkirk (grows redder and stammers out). Why, really, I don't think I can understand you aright, Miss Gobang.

Miss Sally. It is *so* interesting, as you were just now saying, Mr. Lowkirk, to be a little bald — not too bald! The Chief Justice's head, you know, as Bob Endicott says, is above the region of perpetual hair. Do you play lawn tennis, Mr. Lowkirk?

Mr. Lowkirk. I have never played as yet,

Miss Gobang. Could I count on such a fair instructress as you?

Miss Sally. Oh, you do me proud, sir! You would look too sweet for anything in white flannels, a pretty blue sailor knot, and a straw hat! I shall beat you a "love game" yet, I hope.

Mr. Lowkirk. I do not understand you, Miss Gobang.

Miss Sally. But you would if it were not for that white choker, sir. Just think how that little piece of lawn cramps and confines you.

Mr. Lowkirk. It gives me the only dignity which I possess, I fear, Miss Gobang; I pray I may be worthy of it.

Miss Sally. But it cuts you off from clubs, cigars, parties, and horses—from everything which man sighs for.

Mr. Lowkirk. But not from charming women, Miss Gobang.

Miss Sally. How you do rattle on, Mr.

Lowkirk. Don't you envy that nice young parson in the Bab ballad?

"What! said that reverent gent,
Dance through my hours of leisure,
Smoke, bathe myself with scent,
Play croquet? Oh! with pleasure.

"Wear all my hair in curls,
Stand at my door and wink so
At every passing girl?
My brother, I should think so."

Mr. Lowkirk. Very strange language for an ecclesiastic, I think, Miss Gobang. But though we clergymen are deprived of many pleasures, we have our compensations.

Miss Sally. Oh, yes, embroidered slippers! You have a neat foot for a slipper, sir.

Mr. Lowkirk (aside). Gracious! is she going to propose to make me a pair?

Miss Sally (overhearing him). Don't be alarmed, sir; I should never think of carry-

ing coals to such a New Castle as you are in the slipper line. Do you know all the ladies are looking at us? An unmarried clergyman has a hard time of it. Just to think of the oceans of tea and mounds of cake which you have to consume every year. That is what makes you so pale and interesting—or perhaps it is sitting up late to write your sermons. I have always wanted to write a sermon myself. I suppose that it is easy to write one, and it must be such fun to talk so long without being interrupted. You see now why I don't give you much chance to talk now, since you have it all your own way so on Sundays. Do you know, mamma will not allow me to read novels on Sundays? only sermons. Have n't you ever published any sermons? My Sundays would be so different then.

Mr. Lowkirk. Why, no; I have not.

Miss Sally. Oh, I am so sorry! Of

course, though, you will publish a volume of sermons some time, and when you do, you must have your picture as a frontispiece, with that dear curl resting on your forehead, just as it is now. I am afraid you think me shallow, and even worldly, Mr. Lowkirk.

Mr. Lowkirk. Really, Miss Gobang —

Miss Sally. Oh, how sympathetic you are, Mr. Lowkirk! But I see it is getting dark, and mamma has gone home. How can I get home alone? Oh, certainly, Mr. Lowkirk, since you are so kind, I am delighted to have you walk home with me. Don't you hope that we will have a moon? Good night, ladies.

(She walks off, Mr. Lowkirk ambling after, rather in doubt whether he is on foot or on horseback.)

Mrs. Skinner. There goes that dreadful girl. I declare I breathe freer when she is out of the room.

Miss Bellows. So do I, and the way in which she talked to Mr. Lowkirk was shameful. She's making a dead set for him.

Mrs. Elderbrewster. The girls look so like the men nowadays. Her ulster and hat look as if she borrowed them from her friend Endicott.

Mrs. Skinner. If those hats are fashionable, I think I will send John's old one to Mary Jane in Boston. She wanted a new hat.

Mrs. Tompkins. Oh, they manage things so much better in Europe! If she were only a French girl she'd be shut up in a convent.

Miss Lobside. I have often thought that I should like to be in a convent. It must be so poetical.

Miss Bellows. Here is the flannel shirt which Sally Gobang has been working on so long. It is on the floor, of course, and

goodness gracious ! it's finished. Why here is a note sewed up in the flap. I'll read it to you ladies (*they all crowd around her*) :—

"To the romantic but untutored who may chance to get this garment :

"ADORED ZULU,—When you stalk the tiger, 'burning bright in the forests of the night,' or when you refresh your wearied limbs under the shade of the jub-jub-tree, think of the fair maker of this shirt."

Chorus. Well, I never !

Miss Lobside. The bold-faced thing !

Mrs. Elderbrewster. No, she is n't ; she's a little flighty, Lydia, but she has more sense in her little finger than you have in your whole body.

Miss Lobside. Thank you for your impertinence, Mrs. Elderbrewster.

Mrs. Skinner (*rapping with her thimble on the table*). Silence, ladies ! Order ! Order !

Mrs. Tompkins. Yes, order !

Mrs. Skinner. You included, Mrs. Tomp-

kyns! I think that this note is the last straw; and allow me to —

Miss Bellows. She flirts with everything, from the new minister to a Zulu chief; and I must say that —

Mrs. Tompkyns. I've met Daisy Millers in Europe. I know all about it. I've been to Europe, and I —

Mrs. Elderbrewster. Oh, bother Europe!

Mrs. Tompkyns. You would n't pass current in Europe, Mrs. —

Miss Lobside. Of course she would n't; and let me say once for all —

Mrs. Elderbrewster. You're an affected, impertinent minx; and if I were your mother, I —

Mrs. Skinner. Ladies, let me get in a word. If my Mary Jane —

Mrs. Tompkyns. Who cares about Mary Jane? I for one would —

Mrs. Skinner. If my Mary Jane —

Mrs. Tompkyns. Were in Europe, she —

Mrs. Elderbrewster. Would fast become —

Mrs. Skinner. No, she would n't —

Mrs. Elderbrewster. Yes, she would —

Miss Lobside. Give me my smelling-bottle, I beg, Mr. Limpkins. Oh! oh! oh! I shall faint!

Mrs. Skinner. Yes, Mr. Seltzer Water, take her home —

Miss Lobside. Oh! oh! This is a regular Sewing School for Scandal.

Green Curtain! Red Fire!

UNCLE MICAJAH'S TREAT AT
SLAMBASKET BEACH.

BY JOHN T. WHEELWRIGHT.

UNCLE MICAJAH'S TREAT AT SLAMBASKET BEACH.



HE Pettingills were a most respectable family; the head of the house, Solomon Pettingill, was always called by his wife, "Mr. Pettingill, the banker," and, as he was Cashier of the Fireman's Five Cents Savings Bank, he had some right to that title. Their daughter Maria had aspirations, and gave vent to them by playing scales upon the piano. Her brother Johnny, a winning child of ten, was, as Sunday-school weeklies are pleased to call children, the "well-spring of joy in the household."

One hot Saturday afternoon, Mrs. Pettingill

was darning the family stockings in her parlor, when a ring at the front door-bell caused her to put the basket of stockings hurriedly aside and to take up some embroidery.

Mrs. P. I wonder who that can be at the door. If it's a pedler, Bridget, tell him he must go right away; the trouble I am put to by these pedlers and book agents is something dreadful, to say nothing of tramps, who sneak into the front entry and steal the overcoats. Mr. Pettingill lost a new blue overcoat last winter, and his umbrella! Put the chain up, Bridget, when you open the door!

Uncle Micajah Bliffin (coming into the room after an altercation with Bridget). Well, sister Emily, you did n't get my letter! Your hired girl took me for a tramp, and ordered me away.

Mrs. P. Why, brother Micajah Bliffin; where on earth did you come from? You

gave me such a start! When did you come to town? How *do* you do? How is Hepsy?

Uncle M. This morning; I'm pretty mid-dlin'; but Hepsy, she always enjoys poor health; she's been ailing all winter, and now the doctor says she has narvous perspiration!

Mrs. P. Nervous perspiration! How she must suffer!

Uncle M. Yes, she does suffer. The doctor has cut her off from pies, and she says she feels kind of lonesome without pies! Her spirits are kind of downcast; and she is fidgety-like!

Mrs. P. When you go home, I'll send her a bottle of my Calisaya Bark Bitters! But what brought you to town?

Uncle M. I'm a delegate from Billerica to the Prohibitory convention!

Mrs. P. Why not really, Micajah? I didn't know you was interested in politics.

Uncle M. I've made myself kind of conspicuous lately on the subject of rum. I'm

agin it, soul and body. Where's all your folks?

Mrs. P. Solomon is at his banking house; Maria's at the Conservatory of Music; Maria's real musical, you know; little Johnny is at home. The dear child is just home from school. I will call him. (*Calling.*) Johnny! Johnny! come in and speak to your Uncle Micajah Bliffin!

Johnny (without). Sha'n't.

Uncle M. Kind of pert, ain't he?

Mrs. P. He's a dear good boy usually; he must be very tired and nervous to answer me in that way. Come in here, Johnny, your uncle is waiting to see you. (*Johnny comes in.*)

Uncle M. How do you do, Johnny? I haven't seen you since you was in your cradle. Now, who does he look like, Emily?

Mrs. P. He has the Bliffin mouth and chin, but Solomon insists that he favors the Pettingills.

Uncle M. How old be you, Johnny?

Johnny. It is my birthday to-day; I'm ten years old. Ma, can't I have a toy pistol?

Mrs. P. Certainly not, unless you want to die of lockjaw. Why, Johnny, your stocking is torn, and your coat is covered with mud, and your lip is all cut and bleeding! What have you been up to?

Johnny. I had a fight with Tom Baxter.

Mrs. P. Had a fight with that Baxter boy! Now, Johnny, when naughty boys want to fight with you, you should tell them that your mamma does n't think it pretty to fight.

Johnny. He said he'd seen the "Man-Fish" down to Slambasket Beach and I had n't, so we had a fight!

Mrs. P. And the naughty boy hit you on the lip!

Johnny. You just ought to see the black eye I gave him!

Uncle M. So you hain't been to Slam-

basket! I was countin' on goin' to the beach; and seein' it's your birthday, I'll tell you what I'll do! I'll stand treat for the whole family, if you'll bring the supper in a basket, Emily.

Johnny. Bully for you, Uncle Micajah! The "Man-Fish" dives from a height of fifty feet, setting off fireworks all the way!

Mrs. P. Don't put yourself to all this trouble and expense, Micajah! It's a long undertaking to get to the beach, and it may rain!

Uncle M. 'T wont be any great matter of expense, Emily. We will go if we can get back so that I can go to the convention in the evening. Will Maria and Solomon be home soon?

Mrs. P. Oh, yes, it's Saturday. I'm expecting them every minute.

Johnny (from the window). Here they are, now! I say, Maria, Uncle Micajah Blif-fin is in the house, and he's going to take us

all down to the beach ; you'd better go up stairs and put on your new bang !

Uncle M. Well, Maria, glad to see you, how you have grown ! Solomon, how's your health ?

Mr. P. Ah, Micajah, I am delighted to see you in our midst again ! How did you leave your good wife and the crops ?

Uncle M. Drought raised Cain with them, meaning the crops ! Hepsy, as I was tellin' Emily, is under the weather. She could n't come to town with me because she has nervous perspiration !

Mr. P. Ah, indeed, I am very sorry to hear that, Micajah.

Fohunny. Say, pa, Uncle Micajah is going to take us down to Slambasket to see the fireworks.

Mr. P. Very kind of you, very kind indeed, Micajah. The fireworks will be very beautiful, I have no doubt. Speaking of fireworks, I read an excellent story about them

in the paper. In the Henry Clay campaign of 1844, the Whigs in Baltimore had prepared for a celebration of their expected victory. Their candidate was defeated and the fireworks were soaked by rain, and a celebrated wit said, ah — ah — I forget now just what he did say. It struck me as very funny though when I heard it. I wish I could remember it.

Uncle M. I wish you could; I do so like a hearty laugh.

Mrs. P. I must attend to putting the things in the basket. I really don't think there is anything in the house. Maria, won't you help me cut some sandwiches?

Maria. Oh, you are not going to carry supper in a basket; it would be so much nicer to eat it at the hotel.

Mrs. P. We are going to carry it in a basket, my dear! Let's see what we'll want. Cold coffee! Maria, you tell Bridget to put up some cold coffee and milk in the green

bottle on the top shelf in the pantry — the empty Calisaya Bark Bitters bottle. It's very lucky that I had some doughnuts and plum cake made yesterday!

Uncle M. Put in some pies, Emily; I can eat pies, if Hepsy can't. It makes her feel so bad to see them on the table, that we don't have them at home now. I do hanker after them. I made my breakfast this morning at the depot off a hunk of mince pie and a dish of tea, and I can't say when I've enjoyed a meal so much for a long time.

Mr. P. The boat starts at two o'clock; we must make haste, if we mean to catch it.

Mrs. P. Here, take the basket, Micajah! Maria! Maria! get your things on, quickly! Now, Johnny, you must be a good boy and do what I say! Micajah, please take the water-proofs, and my reticule and umbrella. There, Johnny, there's the car coming. Run out and stop it, and look out you don't get run

over. Maria! did you think to put any salt in the basket? Dear me, it's too late to stop for it. Come along quickly! I say, conductor, can we get to the wharf in time for the Slambasket boat? I do not believe we can catch it, Solomon!

(They did catch the boat, arriving at the last moment at the wharf.)

Uncle M. Now, Pettingill, you keep the folks together, and I'll go off and buy the tickets.

Mrs. P. Be sure and get excursion tickets, Micajah, to Slambasket Beach and return; you can make a great saving that way.

Uncle M. All right, Emily! *(To ticket-seller.)* Now, sir, I want five tickets to Slambasket Beach and return; how much will they come to?

Ticket-seller. Two-fifty.

Uncle M. Don't you make reductions for a large party?

Ticket-seller. No, we do not!

Mrs. P. Do hurry up, Micajah ! the boat is whistling !

Uncle M. In a minute, Maria ! Can't you take us for two shillings a head ?

Ticket-seller. No, we cannot ! Put up or shut up ! You'll lose the boat if you don't hurry up !

(Uncle Micajah reluctantly drew out his wallet and paid for the tickets, and the party were soon seated on the sunny side of the boat, in backless camp-stools.)

Uncle M. It's piping hot here ; I'd like a glass of lemonade. Here, boy, give us five glasses of that pink drink ! Got any lozengers and cream-cakes ?

Mrs. P. Pray don't buy any lemonade for me, Micajah ; I will drink a sup out of Johnny's glass.

Johnny. No, you sha'n't ! Guess I can drink it all myself !

Maria (frigidly). I do not care to drink lemonade in this public place,

Uncle M. Not thirsty, eh? Well, won't you have some peanuts, or cream-cakes, or lozengers?

Maria. No, I thank you; I do not care for any.

Fohnny. Sho! Maria, you used to like cream-cakes, and lozengers, too! This pink lemonade is bully! (*And the young epicure washed down with the roseate fluid the cream-cake, which adhered slightly to his face.*)

Mrs. P. Did you bring your banjo along with you, Maria?

Maria. No, of course I did not.

Uncle M. Sorry you did n't. I'm musical too; I used to play on the accordion years ago.

Fohnny. I say, Maria, there's a girl over there who's trying to bow to you; there's a fellow with her!

Maria (looking up). Why, its Venie Wilcox.

Mrs. P. (to Uncle Micajah). The Wil-

coxes are one of our best families. She's a daughter of Wilcox & Gleason, paint and oil.

Maria. Why, Venie Wilcox, how do you do? I have n't seen you for a long time! How do you do, Mr. Wilcox?

Miss Wilcox (giggling). Pretty well, I thank you.

Uncle M. (who did not like to be left out of any conversation). I'm glad you're feeling well! I come down to the city to attend the convention of the Prohibitory party, and thought a trip on the water would sort of strengthen me up. Won't you have a cream-cake, miss? They're squashy, but they're toothsome.

Maria. This is my Uncle Micajah Bliffin, Miss Wilcox and Mr. George Wilcox.

Uncle M. I don't need no introduction to a pretty face, Miss Wilcox. If you don't want a cream-cake, take a peanut or have some lemonade—'tain't very good though.

I wish they'd invent some sort of drink which wouldn't wreck homes and at the same time wouldn't give you the stomach-ache.

Maria. Why, Uncle Micajah!

Miss W. Oh, I think lemonade is real splendid (*giggling*). I should admire to have a glass.

Mr. Wilcox. Are you going down the harbor, Mr. Bliffin?

Miss W. What a ridiculous question, George!

Maria. Yes, we are going down the harbor to have supper at the hotel.

Miss W. And so are we. George is away on the road so much that I don't see anything of him. He's promised to take me down to the beach all summer, but he says he'd rather take some other fellow's sister.

Mr. W. And so would any fellow. Was you to the band tournament they had down here last week, Miss Pettingill?

Maria. No; I wish I had been; I do enjoy music so much!

Miss W. Oh, it was perfectly splendid! I went down with Mr. Farnham; he's perfectly splendid too (*giggling*)!

Mrs. P. Johnny! Johnny! Do not go so near the rail, it's very dangerous. Dear me, what shall I do with the boy; he cannot keep still one minute.

Johnny. I say, pa, what's that black tower for on the island over there?

Mr. P. (*looking up from the newspaper, which he had been committing to memory*). That marks the spot, my son, where three pirates were hung many years ago.

Johnny. Pirates! I'm agoing to be a pirate when I grow up, or keep a candy shop—I don't know which. When do we get to the beach, ma?

Mrs. P. Very soon, Johnny; little boys should be seen and not heard.

Johnny. You always say that you know

I'm in mischief when I am quiet ; I don't care.

Deck Hand. Passengers will land at the upper deck !

(All the passengers got up and started down to the lower deck, and reached the companion-way just as the crowd on the lower deck started to come up. Uncle Micajah grabbed the basket, Mrs. Pettingill and Johnny followed, and Mr. Pettingill folded up his newspaper and put it into his pocket ; Mr. Wilcox and his sister were lost in the crowd.

It was exceedingly hot when our party were fairly down on the beach ; a few disconsolate people were bathing ; two or three children were wading in the shallow breakers which foamed along the sand. In the background the huge wooden hotel, surrounded by broad piazzas, seemed alive with excursionists ; a strain from the last comic opera oddly mingled with the booming of the surf ; an aerial railroad, a light car swung on an endless rope,

and propelled by a crank, tempted the youths to peril their lives ; Johnny in vain pleaded to be allowed to ride in it ; a huge soda-water fountain, enshrined, like an American idol, in an ornamental kiosk, was surrounded by thirsty votaries ; the people walked aimlessly up and down the piazzas or sat on the benches, listening to the band, of which the bass drum was a predominant element ; one and all seemed oppressed with sadness, with that deep sadness which comes over Americans when they make a holiday.)

Uncle M. (putting the basket and wraps upon the sand). Any of you want to go into the sea? I ain't had a bath for years — in the sea, I mean ; you need n't laugh, Maria.

Fohunny. Guess I do! Do you suppose we'll see the Man-Fish?

Mr. P. I saw in the paper that he was to take his dive at eight o'clock.

Uncle M. Coming in, Maria? I'll hire ye a bathing-dress.

Maria. No, I certainly am not.

Mrs. P. I think I will not, Micajah ; my hair will get so wet, and I have n't any comb and brush !

Uncle M. I guess they've a comb strung up at the bathing-shed. Come along in, now do.

Mrs. P. No, we will not go in, thank you ; Johnny may, if you will look out that he does n't go in over his head.

Mr. P. Yes, Johnny, do not go out over your depth ; they used to say that a little boy ought never to go into the water until he learns to swim.

Maria. Let us all go up to the hotel piazza and wait for them.

Uncle M. All right, you go up and amuse yourselves ; we'll get through in time for supper, and to catch the boat to get to the convention in time. I did n't tell you that there was some chance of my being nominated for Lieutenant-Governor.

Mrs. P. You don't say, Micajah. That would be an honor.

Uncle M. Guess I'll get as many votes as "Scattering," or a bolting reformer; still, it *will* look well on the bottom of a flag, "For Lieutenant-Governor—Micajah Bliffin."

Mrs. P. Now, you be careful of Johnny; he's dreadful venturesome and restless! Be careful about the undertow, Johnny, and don't go away from your uncle. Good by.

Mr. P. We shall be at the northwest corner of the piazza, Micajah. Obey your uncle, Johnny.

(When Mr. Bliffin and Johnny appeared on the beach, the former was arrayed in a bathing-dress which would have been loose for General Scott, and he was compelled to tightly grasp his waistband as he walked down the hard sand. Johnny soon perceived a horse-shoe crab, and started in hot pursuit of it. Mr. Bliffin tried the temperature of the water gingerly with his toe.)

Uncle M. (addressing two elderly women, who were jumping up and down in six inches of water). Nipping cold! ain't it, ladies?

(*The women turned around, but did not answer, and continued pouring water on each other from a yellow bucket.*)

Uncle M. I guess you're getting more sand than water out of that bucket, ladies!

(*The ladies moved farther away.*)

Uncle M. (appearing not to notice the rebuff). Where's that boy? Johnny, where be you? What are you about?

Johnny. Chasing a horseshoe crab! He's a buster!

Uncle M. Remember what your mother told you; don't go far away from me; and keep in shallow water.

Johnny. Why don't you go in? Are you afraid of the undertow?

Uncle M. Seems to me the sea is dreadful cold to-day!

Johnny. You've got on a bathing-dress

that was made for one of them fat old women !

(The old ladies paused from their bobbing, and looked angrily at Johnny. His uncle plunged into the water and swam out, forgetting in his confusion his loose bathing-dress ; a huge breaker came rolling in and the old gentleman disappeared under it ; when he reappeared there was a look of agony upon his face, and a nameless blue garment was borne along by the waves near the yellow bucket of the two old ladies.)

Uncle M. *(in a hoarse whisper)*. Johnny !

Johnny. What is it, Uncle ?

Uncle M. Ask them ladies to give you that garment.

Johnny. What garment ?

Uncle M. Never you mind. It's getting dreadful cold out here ; you hurry up, that's a good boy !

Johnny. If it's cold, why don't you come in ?

Uncle M. (his teeth chattering). I can't come in! Get that garment this minute, and fetch it out to me. I have a cramp!

Johnny. You told me not to go out over my head. It's too deep out there. Is there any undertow?

Uncle M. Come along out, Johnny; that's a good boy. I'll hold you up.

Johnny. Look out, Uncle Micajah; there comes another.

Uncle M. Another lady! where?

Johnny. Another breaker!

Uncle M. (sputtering). Ladies, I beg your pardon, but may I trouble you for them pants?

First old Lady. I will have you arrested, if you insult me again!

Second old Lady. It's an outrage to allow drunken men to go in bathing here!

Uncle M. I never touched a drop of liquor in all my life. I may be the candidate of the Prohibitory party for Lieutenant-Governor.

I mean no offence, but if you will give that little boy that garment floating there by your bucket, you will much oblige me.

Fohnny. I say, Uncle Micajah, I will fetch it out to you, if you will treat me to a ride on the aërial railroad; will you?

Uncle M. Of course I will; of course I will; hurry up, please; it is dreadful cold!

(Fohnny went out to his uncle with the longed-for apparel, placing the horseshoe crab in the ladies' bucket on the way. Uncle Micajah soon emerged from the waves and shivered up the beach to the bath-house, looking neither to the right nor to the left. Fohnny wandered around the beach long enough to see one of the ladies throw the crab upon the other from the bucket, and dressing himself quickly, was soon soaring through space in the aërial railroad, to which, in about half an hour, Uncle Micajah turned his steps.)

Railroad Proprietor (addressing Uncle Mi-

cajali). Have a ride, sir? To the post and back, only five cents.

Uncle M. I don't want no ride; I want to pay for that boy's ridin'. How much is it, five cents?

R. R. Prop. Five cents? That boy's been riding for half an hour steady, just as if he was Stewart or John Jacob Astor. He's had thirty-five rides. One dollar and seventy-five cents, sir!

Uncle M. One dollar and seventy-five cents! It's more than your whole concern is worth.

R. R. Prop. Can't help that! I'll keep the boy riding till you pay up. Here goes. (*And Johnny was started on another voyage.*) I want one dollar and eighty cents, now! (*Calling to the crowd.*) Here's the great aërial railroad! gives you the finest view of the blue ocean, and a feeling as if you had the wings of a bird. Only five cents! No extra charge for fat ladies. Here, madam,

you're hefty, but this rope will hold two tons! Here you are! The aerial railroad!

Uncle M. Here's your dollar and eighty cents. Get right down off that machine, Johnny! You're flying away money faster than you'll ever make it.

Johnny. I had a bully ride, Uncle.

Uncle M. You might have had a ride in a barouche and span for the money. This is a costly day for me. Let's see: Steamboat tickets, \$2.50; lemonade and lozengers and cream-cakes, 83 cents; bath-house and suits, \$1.00; that's \$4.33; aerial railroad, \$1.80. Gosh! That makes \$6.33.

Johnny. How did you enjoy your bath?

Uncle M. Don't you go and tell the family about it, now!

Johnny. What will you give me not to?

Uncle M. Give you! Hain't I paid out enough already for you?

Johnny. Will you give me a red balloon?

Uncle M. Yes, I'll give you a red balloon.

Folnny. All right, then, I won't tell. Hullo, ma and pa.

Mr. P. Did you enjoy your bath, Micajah?

Uncle M. Why, certainly; it was very invigorating.

Mrs. P. I just saw my friends, Miss Tinker and Mrs. Tenney, and they said they were insulted by a drunken man who was in bathing with them. They are looking for a policeman. He threw a crab at them, and used dreadful language. They were in tears!

Uncle M. I didn't see no drunken man down there! (*In alarm.*) Ain't it about time to go and get our supper?

Maria. Aren't we going to eat our supper at the hotel, Uncle Micajah?

Mrs. P. Yes; I think it would be very pleasant to have it here.

Uncle M. All right; now we are here,

we might as well eat here. Now, Pettingill, give me a lift with the basket. We'll sit down to one of the tables and eat our fixin's, and we can fill up with a chowder.

Mr. P. But, Micajah, the proprietor will not allow us to eat our own provisions at the restaurant table.

Uncle M. I guess he will, if I pay him for the hire of the plates and knives; come along in.

(Mr. and Mrs. Pettingill reluctantly followed him, but Maria lingered outside the restaurant.)

Uncle M. Come right in, Maria, and set down.

(Uncle Micajah set the basket upon the table; Maria came into the great dining-room; a servant pulled out the chairs for the party, and handed Uncle Micajah the bill of fare.)

Waiter. Take your order?

Uncle M. We are going to eat our own

fixings here. All we will want of you is a dish of chowder all around, and the use of your plates and knives.

Waiter. Can't allow it, sir; dead against all the rules of the house!

Uncle M. What! Can't we eat our victuals here? I'm ready to pay you a fair price for the use of the plates and knives.

Waiter (with an air of great condescension). I'll take your order from the bill of fare.

(Uncle Micajah cast his eye over the bill of fare.)

Uncle M. How much is it for a meal?

Waiter. Dishes are served on the European plan, à la carte.

Uncle M. A la carte! What does he mean by that, Maria? *(Reading the bill of fare.)* Bisque of lobster, 60 cents; Vol au vent à la Financière, \$1.60; Filet of beef aux champignons; what's that?

Waiter. Tenderloin beef with mushrooms.

Uncle M. A dollar and a half for a dish

of meat ! I swan, I guess we'd better leave this place. Look here, young man, you ought to be ashamed of yourself. Why, a man can get board and lodging down to Billerica for three dollars a week. It's flying in the face of Providence to stay in such a place. Come right out on the piazza, Emily. Here, Pettingill ; give me a lift with this basket. I never heard of such extortion. I'll go to look up a place where we can eat our victuals and get a clam chowder inside of reason. You stay here and look after the basket, and I'll soon be back.

Maria. I never felt so mortified in all my life.

Mrs. P. Mortified ! don't speak of it ; but don't go and hurt your uncle's feelings ; he means well.

Mr. P. It was certainly most embarrassing ; I should have insisted upon ordering the supper myself if Micajah had given me a chance. Ah, here he comes.

Uncle M. (elbowing his way through the crowd). A man's just told me of a first-rate place along the beach to eat our supper at; the "Sea Foam Pavilion," he called it; I've no doubt it is a *pay*-vilion; but I guess it's more reasonable than this place. One dollar and a half for a dish of meat — I swan. Here, take up the basket, Pettingill; I'll carry the wraps.

Mr. P. I think it's going to rain, Micajah; the wind has changed. How far off is the place where we are going to have supper?

Uncle M. 'Tain't very far; I guess that's it now. Can we have seats for five and eat our victuals here?

Proprietor. Sit right down here — twenty-five cents a head.

Uncle M. Twenty-five cents a head! Don't know but we'd better eat our supper on the beach.

Proprietor. Have n't got time to talk with

you (*snappishly*). If you want to eat out in the rain, you can.

Mr. P. Really, Micajah, let us sit down and eat our supper. See, it has begun to rain.

Uncle M. Oh, I suppose we might as well; I've spent \$6.33 already, and clam chowder and seats, that makes \$2.50 more; to say nothing of the expenses of traveling to and from Billerica. I expect I had better have stayed at home. This pleasuring I always find kind of expensive and unsatisfactory.

Maria. There s a lot of sand in the top of the basket.

Mrs. P. My stars! The cork has come out of the bottle of cold coffee, and everything is soaked!

Uncle M. That's a pity; but I guess we can stay our hunger, till we get home, with the chowder.

(The waiter dashed five smoking basins of

chowder before them. Johnny swallowed a large spoonful.)

Johnny. Crackey, how hot it is ! give me a glass of water quick ! I've burned my mouth !

Mrs. P. Poor, dear child, how very hot the chowder is ; I am so sorry that you have burned yourself. Does it feel better now ?

Mr. P. It does seem very hot (*blowing in the chowder*). It reminds me of the story of the man whose thermometer was stolen. He advertised, asking for its return, and he said that mercury did n't go low enough to be of any use to the thief in the place he was going to, — no, he must have said "high enough." I don't remember which, but I can remember I was much amused when I heard the story.

Uncle M. I wonder what time it is getting to be ? Why, it's quarter to six ! Emily, what time did you say the boat started ?

Mrs. P. At six o'clock, I think. Did n't

I say six, Solomon? Yes, I am pretty sure it was six.

Uncle M. Goshfrey, we must be a-going! We won't any of us have time to eat these red-hot chowders. It will take them ten minutes to cool, and I would n't miss that convention for a farm down East.

(Mrs. Pettingill began putting the soaked lunch back into the basket. Mr. Pettingill sat blowing upon his chowder in the hope of getting something to eat; and poor Maria, who was almost crying with mortification, retired under her waterproof. When Uncle Micajah had paid the bill, the party started through the rain to the boat, which was crowded with people, driven home by the rain. Hungry, wet, and tired, the party seated themselves in the crowded cabin of the boat, and Mrs. Pettingill served out the soggy remnants of the lunch to them.)

Fohnny. How do you like squash pie and cold corned beef mixed, Maria?

Uncle M. Seems to me this steamer is going precious slow (*after a long pause, during which the party had stared gloomily around the saloon*).

Mr. P. It is not moving at all; the fog is so dense that it would be very unsafe.

Mrs. P. Is n't it very dangerous in the harbor in a fog? I don't see how the skippers can see where they are going. I wonder if our skipper is a responsible person?

Uncle M. Begins to look as if I could n't get to the convention.

Fohnny (*peeping out on the deck*). Not unless you get out and walk. I say, come out here, Maria; the fog is so thick you could cut it with a knife.

Mrs. Pettingill (*listening to the dreary moaning of the steam whistles and the fog-horns of the neighboring craft*). I do not feel secure. Are n't there any life-preservers on board? I should feel safer if I had one on.

Mr. Pettingill (pointing at some coils of canvas-covered cork). There are some life-preservers in the rack overhead. I think it would be a wise precaution to put them on.

Maria. Do not put them on. You will make yourself look too ridiculous.

Uncle Micajah (getting up on his camp-stool and pulling down a pile of the preservers). It's just as well to be ready in case of accident.

(In a few minutes the whole party were swathed in the huge cork life-preservers. The rest of the passengers, panic-stricken, rushed to obtain the safeguards, and Uncle Micajah was particularly energetic in putting them around the pretty girls. A party in the stern of the boat, who had been singing "Fingle Bells," changed their tune to "We will gather by the River," and the whole ship's company sat in the thick fog, gloomily preparing for the worst. All of a sudden a loud splash

was heard in the water alongside of the boat.)

Uncle Micajah (starting up). My Gosh-frey, what's that ?

(" Boy overboard !" announced a sepulchral voice.)

Mrs. P. Boy overboard ! Where's Johnny ? He was here a minute ago. Johnny ! Johnny ! Where can the child be ? Oh ! if he should have fallen overboard ! What shall I do ? Solomon, Solomon, find the child ; oh, Johnny, Johnny !

(Every one peered over the side of the boat ; nothing was to be seen ; but after a minute Uncle Micajah's tall form was seen towering up on the rail of the boat. "If that boy's overboard I'll find him," he cried, as he sprang into the water. Mrs. Pettingill fainted away, and Maria supported her. "Fetch a lantern and a rope !" shouted a voice. "Have you got him ?" asked Mr. Pettingill, in despair. "I think I see him over yonder," cried Uncle

Micajah from the vasty deep. "My Goshfrey, it's only that durned luncheon basket." "Uncle Micajah," piped out Fohnny's voice, "don't hunt for me any more; I have been a-talking with the engineer." Mrs. Pettingill folded her child in her arms. Uncle Micajah was pulled up with a rope to the deck, a long, dripping object.)

Uncle M. Providential I thought of putting on that life-preserver. (*Standing in a pool of water on the deck.*) I swan, this has been a costly kind of trip. Let me see, \$11.88 and \$2.50 for them red-hot chowders, that makes \$14.38; my Sunday best clothes soaked, and my watch ruined with the salt-water, to say nothing of losing the nomination for Lieutenant-Governor! Here, Pettingill, give me a lift with the basket, it's given us a sight of trouble to-day. Guess it will be a long time before you'll forget

Uncle Micajah's Treat at Slambasket Beach.

MISCELLANEOUS.



ULF IN IRELAND.

CHARLES DE KAY.

What then, what if my lips do burn,
Husband, husband ?

What though thou see'st my red lips burn,
Why look'st thou with a look so stern,
Husband ?

It was the keen wind through the reed,
Husband, husband :

'T was wind made sharp with sword-edge
reed

That made my tender lips to bleed,
Husband.

*And hath the wind a human tooth,
Woman, woman ?*

*Can light wind mark like human tooth
A shameful scar of love uncouth,
Woman ?*

What horror lurks within your eyes,
 Husband, husband ?
 What lurking horror strains your eyes,
 What black thoughts from your heart arise,
 Husband ?

*Who stood beside you at the gate,
 Woman, woman ?
 Who stood so near you by the gate
 No moon your shapes could separate,
 Woman ?*

So God me save, 't was I alone,
 Husband, husband !
 So Christ me save, 't was I alone
 Stood listening to the ocean moan,
 Husband !

*Then hast thou four feet at the least,
 Woman, woman !
 Thy Christ hath lent thee four at least,
 Oh, viler than four-footed beast,
 Woman !*

A heathen witch hath thee unmanned,
Husband, husband !
A foul witchcraft, alas, unmanned :
Thou saw'st some old tracks down the sand,
Husband !

*Yet were they tracks that went not far,
Woman, woman ;
Those ancient foot-marks went not far,
Or else you search the harbor-bar,
Woman.*

*It is not yours alone that bleed,
Woman, woman ;
Smooth lips not yours may also bleed,
Your wound has been avenged with speed,
Woman !*

What talk you so of bar and wound,
Husband, husband ?
What ghastly sign of sudden wound,
And kinsman smitten to the ground,
Husband ?

*I saw your blood upon his cheek,
 Woman, woman ;
The moon had marked his treacherous cheek,
I marked his heart beside the creek,
 Woman !*

What ! have you crushed the only flower,
 Husband, husband !
Among our weeds the only flower ?
Henceforward get you from my bower,
 Husband !

I love you not ; I loved but him,
 Husband, husband ;
In all the world I loved but him ;
Not hell my love for Brenn shall dim,
 Husband !

He's caught her by her jet-black hair ;
 Sorrow, sorrow !
He's bent her head back by the hair
Till all her throbbing throat lies bare—
 Sorrow !

You knew me fiercer than the wolf,

Woman, woman ;

You knew I well am named the wolf ;

I shall both you and him engulf,

Woman.

Yet I to you was always kind,

Woman, woman ;

To serpents only fools are kind ;

Yet still with love of you I' m blind,

Woman.

I'll look no more upon your face,

Woman, woman ;

These eyes shall never read your face,

For you shall die in this small space,

Woman !

He's laid his mouth below her chin,

Horror !

That throat he kissed below the chin

No breath thereafter entered in :

Horror, horror !

CLEOPATRA'S DREAM.

W. W. STORY.

Here, Charmian, take my bracelets ;
 They bar with a purple stain
My arms. Turn over my pillows —
 They are hot where I have lain ;
Open the lattice wider ;
 A gauze on my bosom throw,
And let me inhale the odors
 That over the garden blow.

I dreamed I was with my Antony,
 And in his arms I lay :
Ah me ! the vision has vanished —
 Its music has died away ;
The flame and the perfume have perished —
 As this spiced aromatic pastille

That wound the blue smoke of its odor
Is now but an ashy hill.

Scatter upon me rose leaves,
They will cool me after my sleep ;
And with sandal odors fan me,
Till into my veins they creep.
Reach down the lute and play me
A melancholy tune,
To rhyme with a dream that has vanished,
And the slumbering afternoon.

There, drowsing in golden sunlight,
Loiters the low, smooth Nile,
Through slender papyri, that cover
The sleeping crocodile ;
The lotus lolls on the water,
And opens its heart of gold,
And over its broad-leaf pavement
Never a ripple is rolled.
The twilight breeze is too lazy
Those feathery palms to wave,

And yon little cloud is as motionless

As a stone above a grave.

Ah, me! this lifeless nature

Oppresses my heart and brain ;

Oh ! for a storm and thunder —

For lightning, and wild, fierce rain !

Fling down that lute — I hate it !

Take rather his buckler and sword,

And crash them and clash them together,

Till this sleeping world is stirred.

Hark ! to my Indian beauty —

My cockatoo, creamy white,

With roses under his feathers —

That flash across the light.

Look ! listen ! as backward and forward

To his hoop of gold he clings,

How he trembles, with crest uplifted,

And shrieks as he madly swings;

Oh, cockatoo, shriek for Antony !

Cry, " Come, my love, come home ! "

Shriek " Antony ! Antony ! Antony ! "

Till he hears you even in Rome.

There—leave me, and take from my chamber

That wretched little gazelle,
With its bright, black eyes so meaningless,
And its silly tinkling bell.

Take him — my nerves he vexes —
The thing without blood or brain,
Or, by the body of Isis,
I'll snap his thin neck in twain !

Leave me to gaze at the landscape
Mistily stretching away,
When the afternoon's opaline tremors
O'er the mountains quivering play ;
Till the fiercer splendor of sunset
Pours from the west its fire,
And melted as in a crucible,
Their earthly forms expire ;
And the bald, blear skull of the desert
With glowing mountains is crowned,
That, burning like molten jewels,
Circle its temple round.

I will lie and dream of the past time,
Æons of thought away,
And through the jungle of memory
Loosen my fancy to play ;
When a smooth and velvety tiger,
Ribbed with yellow and black,
Supple and cushion-footed,
I wandered where never the track
Of a human creature had rustled
The silence of mighty woods,
And fierce in a tyrannous freedom
I knew but the law of my moods ;
The elephant, trumpeting, started
When he heard my footsteps near,
And the spotted giraffes fled wildly
In a yellow cloud of fear.

I sucked in the noontide splendor
Quivering along the glade ;
Or, yawning, panting and dreaming,
Basked in the tamarisk shade,
Till I heard my wild mate roaring,

As the shadows of night came on
To brood in the trees' thick branches,
And the shadow of sleep was gone.
Then I roused and roared in answer,
And unsheathed from my cushioned feet
My curving claws, and stretched me
And wandered my mate to greet.

We toyed in the amber moonlight
Upon the warm, flat sand,
And struck at each other our massive
arms —

How powerful he was and grand!
His yellow eyes flashed fiercely
As he crouched and gazed at me,
And his quivering tail, like a serpent,
Twitched, curving nervously.

Then, like a storm he seized me,
With a wild, triumphant cry,
And we met, as two clouds in heaven
When the thunders before them fly.

We grappled and struggled together,
For his love, like his rage, was rude ;
And his teeth in the swelling folds of my
neck
At times, in our play, drew blood.

Often another suitor —
For I was flexile and fair —
Fought for me in the moonlight,
While I lay crouching there,
Till his blood was drained by the desert,
And ruffled with triumph and power,
He licked me and lay beside me
To breathe him a vast half-hour ;
Then down to the fountain we loitered,
Where the antelopes came to drink ;
Like a bolt we sprang upon them
Ere they had time to shrink ;
We drank their blood, and crushed them,
And tore them limb from limb,
And the hungriest lion doubted
Ere he disputed with him.

That was a life to live for !
Not this weak, human life,
With its frivolous, bloodless passions,
Its poor and petty strife !
Come to my arms, my hero,
The shadows of twilight grow,
And the tiger's ancient fierceness
In my veins begins to flow.
Come not cringing to sue me !
Take me with triumph and power,
As a warrior that storms a fortress !
I will not shrink or cower.
Come, as you came in the desert,
Ere we were women and men,
When the tiger passions were in us,
And love as you loved me then.

THE DREAM OF EUGENE ARAM.

HOOD.

[Condensed.]

'T was in the prime of summer time,
An evening calm and cool,
And four-and-twenty happy boys
Came bounding out of school ;
.
But the usher sat remote from all,
A melancholy man !

His hat was off, his vest apart,
To catch heaven's blessed breeze ;
For a burning thought was in his brow,
And his bosom ill at ease ;
So he leaned his head on his hands, and read
The book between his knees.
.

At last he shut the ponderous tome ;
With a fast and fervent grasp
He strained the dusky covers close,
And fixed the brazen hasp :
“ O God ! could I so close my mind,
And clasp it with a clasp ! ”

Then leaping on his feet upright,
Some moody turns he took, —
Now up the mead, then down the mead,
And past a shady nook, —
And, lo ! he saw a little boy
That pored upon a book.

“ My gentle lad, what is't you read, —
Romance or fairy fable ?
Or is it some historic page
Of kings and crowns unstable ? ”
The young boy gave an upward glance, —
“ It is ‘ The Death of Abel. ’ ”

The usher took six hasty strides,
As smit with sudden pain, —

Now here, said I, this man shall die,
And I will have his gold !

“Two sudden blows with a ragged stick,
And one with a heavy stone,
One hurried gash with a hasty knife, —
And then the deed was done ;
There was nothing lying at my feet
But lifeless flesh and bone !

.
“And I took the dreary body up,
And cast it in a stream, —
The sluggish water black as ink,
The depth was so extreme :
My gentle boy, remember, this
Is nothing but a dream !

“Down went the corse with a hollow plunge,
And vanished in the pool ;
Anon I cleansed my bloody hands,
And washed my forehead cool,
And sat among the urchins young,
That evening, in the school.

“ O Heaven ! to think of their white souls,
 And mine so black and grim !
 I could not share in childish prayer,
 Nor join in evening hymn ;
 Like a devil of the pit I seemed,
 'Mid holy cherubim !

 “ All night I lay in agony,
 From weary chime to chime ;
 With one besetting horrid hint
 That racked me all the time, —
 A mighty yearning, like the first
 Fierce impulse unto crime, —

“ One stern tyrannic thought, that made
 All other thoughts its slave !
 Stronger and stronger every pulse
 Did that temptation crave, —
 Still urging me to go and see
 The dead man in his grave !

“ Heavily I rose up, as soon
 As light was in the sky,

And sought the black, accursèd pool
With a wild, misgiving eye ;
And I saw the dead in the river-bed,
For the faithless stream was dry.

.
“ With breathless speed, like a soul in chase,
I took him up and ran ;
There was no time to dig a grave
Before the day began ;
In a lonesome wood, with heaps of leaves,
I hid the murdered man !

“ And all that day I read in school,
But my thought was elsewhere ;
As soon as the mid-day task was done,
In secret I was there, —
And a mighty wind had swept the leaves,
And still the corse was bare !

.
“ O God ! that horrid, horrid dream
Besets me now awake !
Again — again, with dizzy brain,
The human life I take ;

And my red right hand grows raging hot,
Like Cranmer's at the stake.

"And still no peace for the restless clay
Will wave or mould allow ;
The horrid thing pursues my soul, —
It stands before me now!"
The fearful boy looked up, and saw
Huge drops upon his brow.

That very night, while gentle sleep
The urchin's eyelids kissed,
Two stern-faced men set out from Lynn
Through the cold and heavy mist ;
And Eugene Aram walked between,
With gyves upon his wrist.

A MODERN SERMON.

The following exhibits the method upon which the average parson constructs his delectable discourses:—

“Brethren, the words of my text are:

“‘Old Mother Hubbard, she went to the cupboard
To get her poor dog a bone;
But when she got there the cupboard was bare,
And so the poor dog had none.’

“These beautiful words, dear friends, carry with them a solemn lesson. I propose this evening to analyze their meaning and to apply it, lofty as it may be, to our everyday life.

• “‘Old Mother Hubbard, she went to the cupboard
To get her poor dog a bone.’

"Mother Hubbard, you see, was old ; there being no mention of others, we may presume she was alone ; a widow — a friendless, old, solitary widow. Yet, did she despair? Did she sit down and weep, or read a novel, or wring her hands? No! *she went to the cupboard.* And here observe that she *went* to the cupboard. She did not hop, or skip, or run, or jump, or use any other peripatetic artifice ; she solely and merely *went* to the cupboard.

"We have seen that she was old and lonely, and we now further see that she was poor. For, mark, the words are '*the* cupboard.' Not 'one of the cupboards,' or the 'right-hand cupboard,' or the 'left-hand cupboard,' or the one above, or the one below, or the one under the floor ; but just *the* cupboard — the one humble little cupboard the poor widow possessed. And why did she go to the cupboard? Was it to bring forth golden goblets, or glittering precious stones,

or costly apparel, or feasts, or any other attributes of wealth? *It was to get her poor dog a bone!* Not only was the widow poor, but her dog, the sole prop of her age, was poor too. We can imagine the scene. The poor dog crouching in the corner, looking wistfully at the solitary cupboard, and the widow going to that cupboard—in hope, in expectation, may be—to open it, although we are not distinctly told that it was not half open or ajar,—to open it for that poor dog.

“‘But when she got there the cupboard was bare,
And so the poor dog had none.’

“‘When she got there!’ You see, dear brethren, what perseverance is. You see the beauty of persistence in doing right. *She got there.* There were no turnings and twistings, no slippings and slidings, no leaning to the right, or faltering to the left. With glorious simplicity we are told *she got there.*

"And how was her noble effort rewarded?

" 'The cupboard was bare!' It was bare! There were to be found neither oranges, nor cheese-cakes, nor penny buns, nor gingerbread, nor crackers, nor nuts, nor lucifer-matches. The cupboard was bare! There was but one, only one solitary cupboard in the whole of that cottage, and that one—the sole hope of the widow, and the glorious loadstar of the poor dog—was bare! Had there been a leg of mutton, a loin of lamb, a fillet of veal, even an 'ice' from Gatti's, the case would have been different, the incident would have been otherwise. But it was bare, my brethren, bare as a bald head, bare as an infant born without a caul.

"Many of you will probably say, with all the pride of worldly sophistry, 'The widow, no doubt, went out and bought a dog-biscuit.' Ah, no! Far removed from these earthly ideas, these mundane desires, poor

Mother Hubbard, the widow, whom many thoughtless worldlings would despise, in that she owned only one cupboard, perceived — or I might even say saw — at once the relentless logic of the situation, and yielded to it with all the heroism of that nature which had enabled her, without deviation, to reach the barren cupboard. She did not attempt, like the stiff-necked scoffers of this generation, to war against the inevitable; she did not try, like the so-called men of science, to explain what she did not understand. She said nothing. 'The poor dog had none!' And then at this point our information ceases. But do we not know sufficient? Are we not cognizant of enough?

"Who would dare to pierce the veil that shrouds the ulterior fate of Old Mother Hubbard, the poor dog, the cupboard, or the bone that was not there? Must we imagine her still standing at the open cupboard door; depict to ourselves the dog still dropping

his disappointed tail upon the floor, the sought-for bone still remaining somewhere else? Ah, no, my dear brethren! we are not so permitted to attempt to read the future. Suffice it for us to glean from this beautiful story its many lessons; suffice it for us to apply them, to study them as far as in us lies, and bearing in mind the natural frailty of our nature, to avoid being widows; to shun the patronymic of Hubbard; to have, if our means afford it, more than one cupboard in the house; and to keep stores in them all. And, O dear friends! keeping in recollection what we have learned this day, let us avoid keeping dogs that are fond of bones. But, brethren, if we do, if Fate has ordained that we should do any of these things, let us then go, as Mother Hubbard did, straight, without curveting or prancing, to our cupboard, empty though it be; let us, like her, accept the inevitable with calm steadfastness; and should we, like

her, ever be left with a hungry dog and an empty cupboard, may future chroniclers be able to write also of us in the beautiful words of our text, 'And so the poor dog had none.' "

AT MIDNIGHT.

EDGAR FAWCETT.

There is something at the window,
 Tapping on the pane.
I heard it twice ; I heard it thrice ;
 I hear it now again —
 Above the whirling tempest and the rushes
 of the rain.

Why should I chill and tremble
 At little sounds like these,
And sweat for fright in my bed at night,
 And feel my pulses freeze, —
 I, that have battled bravely with perils upon
 seas ?

.

We were together on the raft. . . .
 I moaned to Heaven for food ;

The merciless gale brought not a sail
To the sea's great solitude.
"Courage," he whispered . . . and at last
mad famine fired my blood !

God ! how he shuddered when he saw
The murder in my face,
And raved for life beneath the knife,
And begged an hour of grace,
And caught me with his wasted arms in
agonized embrace !

.
Why should I chill and tremble
At little sounds like these,
And sweat with fright in my bed at night
And feel my pulses freeze ?
Back, dim ghost at the window, to thy
grave in the tossing seas !

BURGLAR BILL.

[FROM THE LONDON PUNCH.]

(You must open in a hushed voice, and with an air of wonder at the world's iniquity.)

Through a window in the attic, brawny Burglar Bill has crept ;
Stealthily he seeks a chamber where the jewelry is kept.

(Pronounce "joolery.")

He is furnished with a jemmy, centre-bit, and carpet-bag —

For the latter "comes in handy," as he says,
"to stow the swag."

("Jemmy," "centre-bit," and "carpet-bag" are important words. Put good coloring into them.)

Here, upon the second landing, he secure
may work his will ;

Down below 's a dinner party—up above the
house is still. . . .

(Start here, and extend first finger.)

Suddenly—in spell-bound horror—all his
satisfaction ends ;

For a little white-robed figure by the ban-
ister descends !

(This line requires careful handling, or it may be imagined that the figure was sliding down the banisters, which would simply ruin the effect. Observe the bold but classic use of the singular in "banister," which is more pleasing to the ear than the plural.)

Bill has reached for his revolver—*(business here with fan)*—but he hesitates to fire :
Child is it, or apparition, that provokes him
to perspire ?

Can it be his guardian angel, sent to stay his
hand from crime ? *(In a tone of awe.)*

He could wish she had selected some more
seasonable time !

“Go away !” he whimpers, hoarsely ; “burg-
lars have their bread to earn !
I don't need no Gordian angel comin' givin'
me a turn !”

*(Shudder and hide your eyes, then change
your manner to a naïve surprise.)*

But the blue eyes open wider, ruby lips reveal
their pearl :

“I is not a garden angel ; I is dust a yickle
girl !

(Be very artless here.)

“On the thtairs to thit I'm doin' till the
tarts and jellies tum ;

Partinthon, the butler, *alwayth* thaves for
Baby Bella thome !

Poor man, 'oo is lookin' 'ungry — leave 'oo
burgling fings up dere ;

Tum along and have some thweeties, thitting
on the bottom thtair !”

"Reely, miss, you must excoose me," says the burglar, with a jerk ;

"Dooty calls, and time is pressing — I must set about my work !"

(This gruffly.)

"Is 'oo work to bweak in houses? Nana *told* me so, I'm sure!

Will 'oo twy if 'oo can manage to bweak in my dolls'-house door ?

"I tan *never* det it undone, so my dollies tan't det out ;

They don't *like* the fwont to open every time they 'd walk about !

Twy — and, if 'oo does it nicely, when I'm thent up-thairs to theep,

I will bwing 'oo up thome goodies, which thall be for 'oo to keep !"

(Pause, then emotional.)

Off the little angel flutters, but the burglar wipes his brow ;

He is wholly unaccustomed to a kindly greet-
ing now !

Never with a smile of welcome has he seen
his entrance met !

(Mournfully.)

Nobody (except the policeman) ever wanted
him as yet !

(Bitterly.)

All forgotten are the jewels, once the purpose
of his "job,"

As he sinks upon the door-mat with a deep
and choking sob !

Then, the infant's plea recalling, seeks the
nursery above,

Looking for the Lilliputian crib he is to
crack — for *love* !

(He generally does it for money, you know.)

In the corner stands the dolls'-house, gayly
painted green and red ;

(Coloring again here.)

And the door declines to open — even as the
child had said !

Out come centre-bit and jemmy, all his im-
plements are plied ;

Never has he burgled better, as he feels with
honest pride !

Deftly now the task's accomplished — for
the door will open well,

When a childish voice behind him breaks the
silence like a bell :

“Sank 'oo, Missa Burglar, sank 'oo, and, be-
tause 'oo's been tho nice,

Thee, I've bwrought 'oo up a tartlet — gweat
big gweedies eat the ice !

“Papa says he wants to see 'oo — Partinthon
is tummin' too, —

Tan't 'oo thtay ?” — “ Well, not this evenin',
so, my little dear, adoo !”

*(Make a picture of the next couplet ; let the
audience see the haunted victim of social preju-*

dice beguiling his flight by tender memories, as he escapes his pursuers.)

Fast he speeds across the housetops, but his
bosom throbs with bliss,
For upon his rough lips linger traces of a
baby's kiss!

(This line, tear-laden as it is, needs very delicate treatment to prevent the audience from understanding it in a painfully literal sense.)

(Now we come to the finale, with a highly effective contrast; don't be afraid of it.)

Dreamily, on downy pillow, Baby Bella murmurs sweet;

(Smile here with a sleepy tenderness.)

"Burglar, tum adain an' thee me; I will dive
'oo cakes to eat!"

(That's one side; now for the other.)

In his garret, worn and weary, Burglar Bill
has sunk to rest,

Clasping tenderly a damson tartlet to his
burly breast!

THE CATARACT OF LODORE.

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

“How does the water come down at Lodore?”
My little boy asked me thus, once on a time ;
And, moreover, he tasked me to tell him in
rhyme.

Anon at the word, there first came one daughter,
ter,

And then came another, to second and third
The request of their brother, and to hear how
the water

Comes down to Lodore, with its rush and its
roar,

As many a time they had seen it before.
So I told them in rhyme, for of rhymes I had
store ;

And 't was in my vocation for their recreation
That so I should sing ; because I was laureate
to them and the king.

From its sources which well in the tarn on
the Fell ;
From its fountains in the mountains,
Its rills and its gills, through moss and
through brake,
It runs and it creeps for a while, till it sleeps
In its own little lake. And thence at depart-
ing,
Awaking and starting, it runs through the
reeds,
And away it proceeds, through meadow and
glade,
In sun and in shade, and through the wood
shelter,
Among crags in its flurry, helter-skelter,
Hurry-skurry. Here it comes sparkling,
And there it lies darkling ; now smoking and
frothing

Its tumult and wrath in, till in this rapid
 race
On which it is bent, it reaches the place
Of its steep descent.

The cataract strong then plunges along
Striking and raging as if a war waging
Its caverns and rocks among ; rising and leap-
 ing,
Sinking and creeping, swelling and sweeping,
Showering and springing, flying and flinging,
Writhing and ringing, eddying and whisking,
Spouting and frisking, turning and twisting,
Around and around with endless rebound ;
Smiting and fighting, a sight to delight in ;
Confounding, astounding, dizzying and deaf-
 ening
The ear with its sound.

Collecting, projecting, receding and speeding,
And shocking and rocking, and darting and
 parting,

And threading and spreading, and whizzing
and hissing,

And dripping and skipping, and hitting and
splitting,

And shining and twining, and rattling and
battling,

And shaking and quaking, and pouring and
roaring,

And waving and raving, and tossing and
crossing,

And flowing and going, and running and
stunning,

And foaming and roaming, and dinning and
spinning,

And dropping and hopping, and working and
jerking,

And guggling and struggling, and heaving
and cleaving,

And moaning and groaning ;

And glittering and flittering, and gathering
and feathering,

And whitening and brightening, and quivering
and shivering,
And hurrying and skurrying, and thundering
and floundering ;

Dividing and gliding and sliding,
And falling and brawling and sprawling,
And driving and riving and striving,
And sprinkling and twinkling and wrinkling,
And sounding and bounding and rounding,
And bubbling and troubling and doubling,
And grumbling and rumbling and tumbling,
And clattering and battering and shattering ;

Retreating and beating and meeting and
sheeting,
Delaying and straying and playing and spraying,
Advancing and prancing and glancing and
dancing,
Recoiling, turmoiling and toiling and boiling,
ing,

And gleaming and streaming and steaming
 and beaming,
 And flapping and rapping and clapping and
 slapping,
 And curling and whirling and purling and
 twirling,
 And thumping and pumping and bumping
 and jumping,
 And dashing and flashing and splashing and
 clashing ;
 And so never ending, but always descend-
 ing,
 Sounds and motions for ever and ever are
 blending,
 All at once and all o'er, with a mighty up-
 roar,
 And this way the water comes down at
 Lodore.

IT NEVER COMES AGAIN.

R. H. STODDARD.

There are gains for all our losses,
There are balms for all our pain;
But when youth, the dream, departs,
It takes something from our hearts,
And it never comes again.

We are stronger and are better
Under manhood's sterner reign.
Still, we feel that something sweet
Followed youth, with flying feet,
And will never come again.

Something beautiful is vanished,
And we sigh for it in vain.
We behold it everywhere,
On the earth and in the air,
But it never comes again.

THE RELIEF OF LUCKNOW.

TENNYSON.

[Condensed.]

DEDICATORY POEM TO THE PRINCESS ALICE.

Dead Princess, living Power, if that, which
lived

True life, live on — . . . if what we call
The spirit flash not all at once from out
This shadow into substance — then perhaps
The mellow'd murmur of the people's praise
.

Ascends to thee; and this March morn that
sees

Thy soldier-brother's bridal orange-bloom
Break thro' the yews and cypress of thy grave,
And thine Imperial mother smile again,
May send one ray to thee: and who can tell —
Thou — England's England-loving daughter —
thou

Dying so English thou wouldst have her flag
Borne on thy coffin — where is he can swear
But that some broken gleam from our poor
earth

May touch thee? While remembering thee, I
lay

At thy pale feet this ballad of the deeds
Of England, and her banner in the East:

I.

Banner of England, not for a season, O banner
of Britain, hast thou

Floated in conquering battle or flapt to the
battle-cry!

Never with mightier glory than when we had
reared thee on high,

Flying at the top of the roofs in the ghastly
siege of Lucknow —

Shot thro' the staff or the halyard, but ever
we raised thee anew,

And ever upon the topmost roof our banner
of England blew.

II.

Frail were the works that defended the hold
that we held with our lives —

Women and children among us, God help
them, our children and wives !

Hold it we might — and for fifteen days, or
for twenty at most.

.

“Every man die at his post !” and there
hail'd on our houses and halls

Death from their rifle-bullets, and death from
their cannon-balls.

.

Bullets would sing by our foreheads, and bul-
lets would rain at our feet —

Fire from ten thousand at once of the rebels
that girdled us round —

Death at the glimpse of a finger from over
the breadth of a street,

Death from the heights of the mosque and
the palace, and death in the ground !

Mine ? Yes, a mine ! Countermine ! down,
down ! and creep thro' the hole !

Keep the revolver in hand ! You can hear
him — the murderous mole.

Quiet, ah ! quiet — wait till the point of the
pickaxe be thro' !

Click with the pick, coming nearer and nearer
again than before —

Now let it speak, and you fire, and the dark
pioneer is no more ;

And ever upon the topmost roof our banner
of England blew.

.

III.

Handful of men as we were, we were Eng-
lish in heart and in limb,

Strong with the strength of the race to com-
mand, to obey, to endure,

Each of us fought as if hope for the garrison
hung but on him ;

Still — could we watch at all points ? We
were every day fewer and fewer.

.

IV.

Praise to our Indian brothers, and let the
 dark-face have his due !
 Thanks to the kindly dark-faces who fought
 with us, faithful and few,
 Fought with the bravest among us, and drove
 them, and smote them, and slew,
 That ever upon the topmost roof our banner
 in India blew.

V.

Men will forget what we suffer and not what
 we do. We can fight ;
 But to be soldier all day and be sentinel all
 thro' the night —

.
 Ever the labor of fifty that had to be done
 by five,
 Ever the marvel among us that we should be
 left alive,

.

Heat like the mouth of a hell, or a deluge of
cataract skies,
Stench of old offal decaying, and infinite tor-
ment of flies,
Thoughts of the breezes of May blowing over
an English field,
Cholera, scurvy, and fever, the wound that
would not be heal'd.

.
Valor of delicate women who tended the hos-
pital bed,
Horror of women in travail among the dying
and dead,
Grief for our perishing children, and never a
moment for grief,
Toil and ineffable weariness, faltering hopes
of relief,
Havelock baffled, or beaten, or butcher'd for
all that we knew —
Then day and night, day and night, coming
down on the still-shatter'd walls

Millions of musket-bullets, and thousands of
cannon-balls —
But ever upon the topmost roof our banner of
England blew.

VI.

Hark cannonade, fusillade! is it true what was
told by the scout?
Outram and Havelock breaking their way
thro' the fell mutineers!
Surely the pibroch of Europe is ringing
again in our ears!
.
Dance to the pibroch!—saved! we are
saved!—is it you? is it you?
Saved by the valor of Havelock, saved by
the blessing of Heaven!
“Hold it for fifteen days!” we have held it
for eighty-seven!
And ever aloft on the palace-roof the old
banner of England blew.

ANNIHILATION.

GEORGE EDGAR MONTGOMERY.

If I could know, as none can know,
That, when my life is ended, I
Shall perish, like the aureate glow
Of rounded stars that die ;

That in the dark beyond our earth
There is no radiant heaven, nor hell,—
I should not curse my human birth,
I should not fear to tell

The sadly wise and bitter thought
That none were born immortal, none
Predestined to a God-life wrought
Beyond our sky and sun.

Nor should I fear to fill my part,
To live my life out, to aspire

With the whole passion of my heart,
To love and to desire.

For it is true that virtue, power,
And all the sweetness of the mind,
Are real as beauty in the flower
And music in the wind ;

That any mortal man may be
Sublimely stirred, without a sense
That in his doing he must see
Some future recompense.

Yet, though I strove with fervent will
To act with noble zeal and grace,
And with a faith that each may still
Live deathless in the race —

I think, in lonely hours when sleep
Obscures the grief that many bear,
That I would turn to heaven and weep
With heart-break and despair :

For I should then remember one
Whose gentle love is more to me
Than all the years that time can run,
Than earth, and air, and sea ;

And oh, to part with her were worse
Than death and its inhuman fate —
To lose her in a universe
Whose gods annihilate.

CARCASSONNE.

(From the French of Gustave Nadaud.)

M. E. W. SHERWOOD.

How old I am ! I'm eighty years !
I've worked both hard and long.
Yet, patient as my life has been,
One dearest sight I have not seen —
It almost seems a wrong.
Alas, our dreams ! they come not true ;
I thought to see fair Carcassonne !
I have not seen fair Carcassonne !

One sees it dimly from the height
Beyond the mountain blue ;
Fain would I walk five weary leagues —
I do not mind the road's fatigues —
Through morn and evening's dew ;

But bitter frosts would fall at night,
And on the grapes that yellow blight !
 I could not go to Carcassonne,
 I never went to Carcassonne.

They say it is as gay all times
 As holidays at home ;
The gentles ride in gay attire,
And in the sun each gilded spire
 Shoots up like those of Rome !
The bishop the procession leads,
The generals curb their prancing steeds —
 Alas ! I know not Carcassonne !
 Alas ! I saw not Carcassonne !

Our Vicar's right ; he preaches loud,
 And bids us to beware.
He says : " O guard the weakest part,
And most the traitor in the heart,
 Against ambition's snare !"
Perhaps in autumn I can find
Two sunny days with gentle wind ;

I then could go to Carcassonne,
I still could go to Carcassonne.

My God and Father ! pardon me
If this my wish offends !
One sees some hope more high than he,
In age as in his infancy,
To which his heart ascends !
My wife, my son, have seen Narbonne,
My grandson went to Perpignan ;
But I have not seen Carcassonne,
But I have not seen Carcassonne.

Thus sighed a peasant, bent with age,
Half dreaming in his chair.
I said, " My friend, come go with me
To-morrow ; these thine eyes shall see
Those streets that seem so fair."
That night there came, for passing soul,
The church bell's low and solemn toll !
He never saw gay Carcassonne.
Who has not known a Carcassonne ?

INCIDENT OF THE FRENCH CAMP.

ROBERT BROWNING.

You know we French stormed Ratisbon :
 A mile or so away,
On a little mound, Napoleon
 Stood on our storming-day ;
With neck out-thrust, you fancy how,
 Legs wide, arms locked behind,
As if to balance the prone brow,
 Oppressive with its mind.

Just as, perhaps, he mused, " My plans
 That soar, to earth may fall,
Let once my army-leader Lannes
 Waver at yonder wall,"—
Out 'twixt the battery-smokes there flew

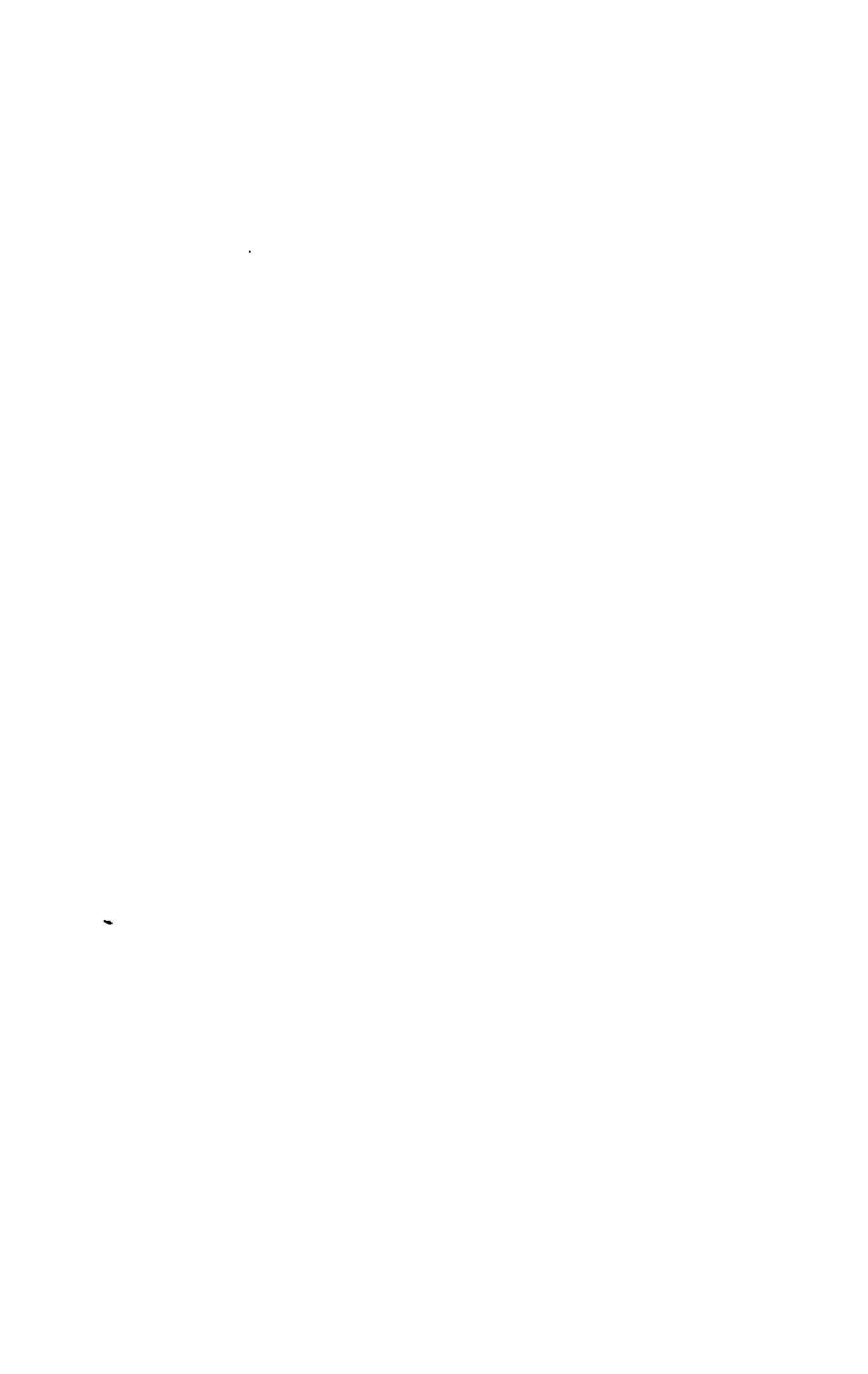
A rider bound on bound
Full-galloping ; nor bridle drew
Until he reached the mound.

Then off there flung in smiling joy,
And held himself erect
By just his horse's mane, a boy :
You hardly could suspect,
(So tight he kept his lips compressed,
Scarce any blood came through,)
You looked twice ere you saw his breast
Was all but shot in two.

"Well," cried he, "Emperor, by God's grace
We've got you Ratisbon !
The marshal's in the market-place,
And you'll be there anon
To see your flag-bird flap his vans
Where I, to heart's desire,
Perched him !" The chief's eye flashed ; his
plans
Soared up again like fire.

The chief's eye flashed ; but presently
Softened itself, as sheathes
A film the mother-eagle's eye
When her bruised eaglet breathes :
"You're wounded !" "Nay," his soldier's
pride
Touched to the quick, he said :
"I'm killed, sire !" And, his chief beside,
Smiling, the boy fell dead.





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George Riddle's readings.

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